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**THE  
PIANO-PLAYER  
REVIEW.**

A MONTHLY  
MUSICAL JOURNAL FOR  
USERS OF PIANO-PLAYERS AND  
ALL MUSIC LOVERS.

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# Piano-Player Review.

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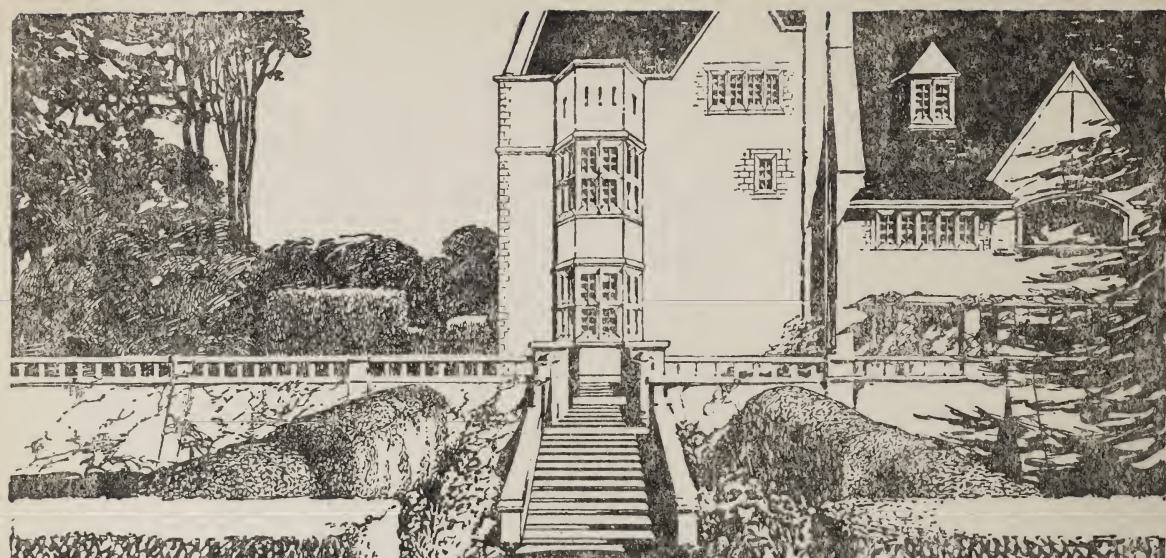
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# The Piano-Player Review

No. 7.      APRIL, 1913.

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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
EDITORIAL - - - - -	348
ADVENTURES WITH MY PIANO-PLAYER—III.—BERTRAM SMITH - - - - -	352
UNDESIRABLE OPPOSITION - - - - -	356
WOMEN AND MUSIC—I.—SYDNEY GREW - - - - -	360
THE STUDENTS' PAGE—II. - - - - -	371
PERSONAL DOCUMENTS—II. - - - - -	383
CURIOUS COMPOSITIONS—I. - - - - -	385
MUSICAL RESEARCH - - - - -	390
MUSIC NOTES AND NEWS - - - - -	392
CONCERTS, LECTURES AND RECITALS - - - - -	396
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS - - - - -	398
REVIEWS AND PRESS COMMENTS - - - - -	401
CORRESPONDENCE - - - - -	402

## EDITORIAL.

**“THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW” exists in the interests of the piano-player world in general. It has no concern for any particular maker, or make, of instrument whatsoever.**

\* \* \* \* \*

The vast industry of player-pianos, and the far-reaching effects of the art of player-pianism, have been perceptible for some three or four years. During the present decade, two important English cyclopædic dictionaries have been published—*The Encyclopædia Britannica* (1911), and *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

The former of these covers the historical and mechanical aspects of the case, the latter, with fine intrepidity, tacitly declares the non-existence of the case at all—at least, we have discovered no reference to it under such heads as “pianoforte,” “mechanical,” “pneumatics,” “degradation of taste,” etc.

The new *Grove* was edited by J. A. Fuller Maitland, Esq., M.A., F.S.A., until recently music critic of *The Times*. The article “pianoforte,” being from the hand of the late A. J. Hipkins, Esq., F.S.A., is now a generation old, and, consequently, out of court. The article “pianoforte-playing,” however, was written by the editor, and represents the record this dictionary is to maintain of what was happening contemporaneously with its production.

Comment is unnecessary, except in so far as the following contains comment. . . . Vol. 1. of the dictionary (A to E) came out in 1904. It covered the English composer Granville Bantock. Vol. 5 (T to Z) came out in 1910. The latter contained an appendix of important happenings which, falling between 1904 and 1910, naturally could not have been incorporated in the already issued body of the dictionary.

For instance, English composers who (as Delius) had long won fame abroad, but who, being not widely known in England, could not be said to exist really in the year



their initial letter was reached, and so were passed over, were here dealt with, drawn into the appendix; and other English composers who (as Josef Holbrooke and Walford Davies), covered to date in due place, had continued composition on presumably satisfactory lines, received in the appendix the attention of an "added list of compositions." For reasons never yet made public, the six years' work of Granville Bantock were ignored. The significance of the omission is hinted at in the remark that this six years' work had given rise to about seventy compositions in all, from "Omar Khayyam" down to small part-songs.

It would seem, therefore, that the failure of *Grove* to recognise the vast energy behind the player-piano is an encouraging demonstration of its wonder and value.

\* \* \* \* \*

We intend to give, month by month, an instructive or explanatory *résumé* (so far as is practicable) of all compositions discussed in the preceding issue of the *Piano-Player Review*. The greatest claim of our instrument is, that no work need be known solely by name. It is as easy for us to play the music as to pronounce the title—easier sometimes. Therefore, in order to make the *Review* as complete as the "player," whatever compositions are mentioned, must ultimately be set out again for convenience of student-readers. . . . Player-pianists in the mass differ from ordinary musicians. The latter are content (perforce, unhappily) to know merely of the existence of great works, sometimes for years, invariably during the term of their studentage. The former, once interest is aroused, do not rest until they have at least spent a few hours in personal observation of the works. We have heard of player-pianists searching for weeks for such obscure things as the "Bible Sonatas" of Kuhnau, and of others rising an hour before time on cold mornings in order to complete an overnight reading of such rare works as the clavier fantasia and fugue in A minor of Bach (Peter's Ed., No. 208, p. 22). . . . Hence the boldness of our belief in the essential value of the *Piano-Player Review* to all professed students of music. Our

March issue covered, without intentional effort—some fifty or sixty musical compositions. All but half-a-dozen of these are available for the player-pianist, and could be studied by him with greater ease than even a Bernard Shaw preface.

\* \* \* \* \*

The policy of the *Piano-Player Review* is larger than is ordinarily common to musical periodicals. Such papers appeal almost exclusively to musicians. We appeal to a world of activity where—other and different interests being predominant—music is approached for relief and recreation, *i.e.*, observed from standpoints established intellectually upon other arts and sciences. . . .

The average player pianist is a man or woman engaged in some non-musical matter, generally of a character that stimulates the mind to perceptions of a character which, though mostly dulled in the musician, are none the less essential in the artist. . . .

The influence of the influx of energy thereby represented must eventually be great. It may, indeed, change the aspect of the art. Coming generations may see practical music taken out of the hands of the few into the control of the many.

There may actually come about an artistic intellectuality in all musically inclined—the result of which would be a wise exercise of power, and a constructive discrimination as to ways and means, in a general suffrage and unrestricted emancipation of art-lovers. If democracy is to grow in world-control, so it must in art. There is certainly nothing so purely democratic as the player-piano. . . .

By fortunate coincidence, these are the days when men recognise that music is one of many linked arts, depending upon the same main waves of thought and feeling, and differing only as depth and height differ from the reverse.

Hence our articles have an unusually wide scope, and our general policy differs from what is common in musical journalism.

\* \* \* \* \*

The cultured musician, coming to the piano-player for the first time, and with no knowledge of its technicalities, should not test it primarily by any piece he knows well—least of all a pianist by a pianoforte composition. The result would be disastrous. It would be something like meeting, in English translation, a French poem known for years in the original. The musician should take what is completely strange to him, but what is, at the same time, cast in more or less familiar idiom. The novelty of the piece itself will prevent him from looking for refinements he himself could not produce, even were they within the capabilities of the instrument; and the familiar nature of the idiom will keep from his mind confusion which, present, would affect the clear issue of the case . . . When the musician has acquired the “feel” of the instrument, he may then test, not the instrument, but himself, by means of some familiar composition. His experience then will be the same as with the supposed translation of the foreign poem. Bit by bit the spirit of the original will reveal itself to him, and the common emotionality of the two forms be apprehended; until the poem stands out again in the perfect light of its own atmosphere, different to the physical senses, perhaps, but essentially the same to the spiritual.

\* \* \* \* \*

Readers should bear in mind that the Editor of the PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW is anxious to help them in their studies. Enquiries will be dealt with in the REVIEW month by month, as to the form, history, or artistic character of any composition, and also as to the best method of practising the same. Advice, moreover, will be given to beginners, and to others somewhat more advanced, as to what pieces (or sequences of pieces) best adapted for study.

\* \* \* \* \*

We are able to inform our readers that the manufacturers of music rolls have decided to allow “Royalty” rolls to be circulated in the libraries. This announcement is particularly interesting in view of our remarks on this subject in the December issue.

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## ADVENTURES WITH MY PIANO-PLAYER.

### III.

BY BERTRAM SMITH.

After many weeks of these exuberant and random methods, I began to settle down to a quiet life. The truth is that in a sense I had already reached a state of exhaustion. I had devoured all the more obvious plums and light-heartedly experimented right and left, and I would sit with my catalogue on my knee wondering what was to be done next. But at this point a diversion occurred, which gave me my first experience of systematic progress. Bayreuth tickets arrived. Now I had myself in former years been a frequent visitor to Bayreuth, and my knowledge of the Wagner scores was tolerably complete. But on this occasion I was to have a companion, perhaps I may call him my "pupil," whose enthusiasm was great and whose acquaintance with the subject was very slender. I doubt if there is any form of musical study so immediately productive of tangible results as the study of a Wagner score previous to a first performance. The person of average intelligence and moderate musical attainments who finds himself in the Bayreuth Theatre with no previous knowledge whatever of what he has come to see and hear is in an almost helpless, a rather tragic, position. Even a very slight understanding of the question goes a long way. To be able to recognise a handful of leading motives is in itself of enormous value, and the more familiar one has become with the score the better. It is not easy to become too familiar. He is a pretty old and hardened Wagnerian for whom the performance does not hold something in the way of new discovery. In my own early days when I was covering all the ground for the first time I was very much alive to the importance of this consideration. I well remember, many years ago in Germany, my laborious efforts before a first performance of the *Ring*. I had immense enthusiasm, and an unbounded thirst for knowledge, with most inadequate means of satisfying it. My companion in



those days had some little ability in reading at sight on the piano, and with a high determination we purchased the whole of the piano scores, the texts and a small book of motives—the first of the sort that had ever been published, which being in German added something to the sum of the difficulties to be overcome. Then we hired a piano and set to work.

It was a long and desperate struggle that we had embarked upon, in our endeavour to force these four great scores to give up their secrets. It was a struggle compounded of victory and defeat, of much dreary groping in the dark, of occasional joyful moments of illumination. For several weeks we were at it almost every evening, first playing over the motives, and then trying laboriously to dig them out of the score; at times turning a number of pages rapidly, persuading ourselves that “there was nothing much there”; held up every now and then by a passage that “looked as if it might be something.” My companion, tearing his hair at intervals, frequently rolling up his sleeves and returning heroically to the attack, really did wonders, considering his capacities, and after a fashion we made our way to the end of the last score, though there were some acts—notably the second of *Götterdämmerung*—that we had made little or nothing of. Certainly we were amply repaid by the results. My first *Ring* performance will always be an outstanding memory, and I have been on fine terms of growing familiarity with that work ever since. But I cannot but contrast that painful campaign of long ago with this second occasion, when the same task must be undertaken for the benefit of my pupil. For now the way was made easy: we had a short cut to the end that we desired. In a word—Enter the Player-piano.

Again the familiar old scores were brought forth, the texts, the tattered old book of motives—the latter reinforced by a more modern edition. But it was chiefly our new ally that we depended on. A box came down from the library full of *Ring* preparations, and even the book of motives was at last discarded in favour of two rolls on which they were all put forth *seriatim*. Where in the

old days we had ploughed our weary way one step at a time, we now advanced by leaps and bounds. Of course, the whole of the four scores cannot be obtained for the player, but all the "purple patches" and usual concert selections were there. The piano scores must still be drawn upon for many intermediate passages, and fortunately my pupil was able to make something of these, reading at sight. Taking each drama in turn, he would first read the text and after that master the motives. And then we would get to work. We simply got on like a house on fire. I would roll up the player and go through a record, pausing to elucidate where necessary, frequently turning back to repeat a few bars, and always connecting the music with the text by the use of the piano score, which proved an admirable bridge to hold the two together. As soon as that roll was exhausted we would take off the player and work our way through the score till we arrived at the beginning of another. Then I would return to my post and continue my conversational lecture, and supplement it with numerous questions—Have we had that motive before, and if so, where? We very satisfactorily succeeded in calling-up the scholastic atmosphere. But the upshot was that not only was the process of assimilation wonderfully easier than under the old conditions and much more interesting, but infinitely more complete. For the most complex passages were now within our powers, and could be comfortably dissected and digested. There are in the *Ring* many hard nuts for the beginner to crack. It is difficult for him at first to make very much, for instance, of the second act of *Walküre* or of parts of *Rheingold*. But the way was made quite easy for us

And after that, *Parsifal*. This was a still more important undertaking. If one is keen enough about the thing, one may generally find opportunity to follow up the *Ring*, and by repeated hearings become perfectly familiar with it. But it is not given to many of us to go often to Bayreuth, and a performance of *Parsifal* may not be repeated for many years. For this reason to get one's full value in the theatre it is essential to be in a condition

to receive and understand. Otherwise it is certain that much of the meaning and much of the beauty and splendour of that great work will simply pass you by, perhaps never to be re-captured. At the best, though a broad impression may be made a wealth of exquisite detail must be lost. Thanks to the player-piano, the scope of one's understanding of it is quite enormously enhanced. For *Parsifal* has been most generously treated by the makers of player records. Almost the whole of it may be obtained.

It is not too much to say that we had a magnificent grasp of the whole score before we had finished our studies. Though I myself had heard the work four times, I found that I too had much, very much, to learn. It was a splendid new experience to feel perfectly at home with every part of the performance, to be able to receive it all as an old friend without the slightest sense of endeavour, strain or effort. And it is not to be supposed that anything is lost by this great familiarity—any of the freshness of a first impression. It is only necessary to contrast the effect of the piano score—badly rendered on the player by myself—and the glowing power of the Bayreuth orchestra to understand that that cannot be so.

In later years we have taken *Tristan* and *Meistersinger* in the same way. Again the results were excellent, though not nearly so many rolls were available of these two works. It is surprising how little has been done as yet for *Meistersinger* in particular in the matter of arranging. That is surely not a work in which it is necessary to pick out purple patches. For my own part I should like to have every note of it, that I might go right through it in a single evening, as a friend of mine, a brilliant pianist, did on one occasion.

And so, forward to Bayreuth! I hope that I may advise all aspiring Bayreuthers to follow the example here set forth. For thus was my pupil made the Perfect Wagnerite, armed at every point, with a tenth part of the labour which I myself expended toward the same end. And assuredly he had his reward. I do not suppose that there was any single person in the theatre in the course of that festival that was quite so happy as he.



## UNDESIRABLE OPPOSITION.

### I.

Knowledge does more than give birth to power. It awakens interest, also experimental curiosity, out of which arise uniform activities tending towards a universal apprehension of things.

Hence, the cult of the player-piano, the more firmly it consolidates musical knowledge, the more completely will it induce a general knowledge of art.

This is scarcely an exaggeration. Advancement depends ultimately upon enjoyment, enjoyment upon understanding, and understanding upon opportunity.

The man who has no opportunity to give to Browning the attention demanded of those who would understand him, cannot enjoy Browning.

Unfortunately, such opportunity is rare. Few persons are sufficiently free of temporal obligations or mental strain to "soak" themselves in great thinkers. They have no long hours for slow reading, no silent moods for the hearing of higher truths than the everyday world seems to have need of.

The loss is fatal. The greater part of us are like colliers working underground, in dust and warm air, confined to a shelf or tunnel, with above us the grass, and the trees, birds singing, and clouds moving slowly over a deep blue sky. Of course, we need coal, and so some of us must be colliers. But a wise, unselfish arrangement would cramp and stifle no one for more than a few endurable hours, leaving all free to enjoy what is even more beautiful than the coals of modern commercialism—to enjoy, perhaps, the more vividly because of the contrast.

If all men—to the full of their powers—understood Wordsworth and Browning, the state of the world would be changed; for (to re-phrase the preceding thought) the enjoyment of one beauty stimulates the mind to seek out and enjoy others; such curiosity, and such satisfaction of curiosity, being the sole factors of spiritual evolution.



## II.

These truths are platitudinous, though practice seems designed to falsify them. They apply strongly to all arts, but most strongly to music, where the difficulties of understanding are increased a thousand-fold.

The nature of music is so profound, and its meaning so elusive, that its true purport escapes most of us. I do not believe one man in a million enjoys music as a Wordsworth enjoys nature, or a child a fairy-tale. We do not *understand* it, least of all those of us who make it our "profession." Apart from composers, the germ of true musicianship lies in curiously unexpected corners—in children humming a song; in vulgar, middle-class audiences subdued to silence by the power of a Bach organ-fugue; in revolutionaries roaring out songs; in fashionable audiences stirred momentarily to the heart's core by an artist's abandonment; in old people finding consolation in songs dead a half-century—it is here that the enjoyment of music (which is to say, the perception of its truth) is seen to be. And it is here that opportunity is most lacking. If it is hard to learn to read a Wordsworth ode, how much harder is it to learn to play a Bach fugue; and if it is hard to reduce a Whitman or Browning poem to one central point, how much harder is it to encompass, in one swift act of comprehension, the arc of significance bent into the framework of a Brahms or Beethoven symphony.

Yet, experience tells us, with fair opportunity all men and women find something within them of power to understand and enjoy even the hardest of these things.

## III.

But the fair opportunity is absolutely essential. Without it, nothing can be done. If Bach hadn't written his music, we shouldn't have loved it; and if people don't hear it, they can't be expected to understand it. Economic conditions put a stop to wide-spread musical education, lack of general intelligence (municipal and governmental mostly) to frequent or easily accessible performances.

The former throw men and women outside of themselves for what they want, the latter drives them back upon themselves again. In the end they go to the music-hall, and (small blame to them) cease to act the part of tennis-ball to two bad players.

Here enters the supreme chance of the player-piano. It gives people all that, in the beginning, they can want, and with less physical strain or mental effort than reading essays or poems aloud.

#### IV.

The artist's mind, like the man's love, grows by what it feeds on. The player-pianist, feeding at will upon the larger works of musical art, finds his mind in a state of rapid and continual expansion.

The true understanding of music, desired for the people by all sincere musicians, can be achieved only by a mind expanded in our manner.

Yet our manner is most bitterly opposed even by apparently ardent musicians. Why? The cause, perhaps, is not far to seek. When a man associates continually with small things, he more and more identifies himself with them, until, losing due sense of proportion, he fails to perceive greatness in things; perhaps because of their very greatness. The average musician is confined to the keyboard of one instrument. The circumstances of his life do not give him leisure for large brooding and complete observation of things. His professional walk compels him to pretend a permanent superiority of knowledge, if not an omniscience of understanding. In the end, he stunts completely his potential faculty for expansion (a faculty existent surely in all adequate souls). What is the result? He ridicules the rise of new ideas in music. (It is on record that many members of the Incorporated Society of Musicians laughed outright in the concert-room at the new harmonies of some of the young composers performed at the Birmingham Conference. . . . A month ago *Prometheus* was hissed in London.) The narrowed musician pours scorn upon fresh ideals. Confronted with a novel means of developing general catholicity

in taste, he first denies the means, then, when proved wrong, disputes the taste; and, finally, driven into a corner, he grows sulky, and loses his coherency.

## V.

The significance of the player-piano is not, it seems, to be apprehended in England by the present generation of professional musicians. The subject is too large for them, too comprehensive, too democratic. They do not like the thought that Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms are now to live, in all their largeness, in the corner of any room, at the will of any serious-minded person. They regret they can no longer constrain music to their own personal preserves. What does Mr. Filson Young say in his noteworthy diatribe :—" *Let us deal with these mechanical contrivances once and for all, and then dismiss them from our thoughts*" (in *The English Review*, as quoted in the *Piano-Player Review* for March, p. 336), which is to say, "*Let us kill these new-fangled religionists, deport these revolutionaries, imprison these agitators and innovators, and then, ostrich-like, thrust our heads into sand.*" Well, the sand is there. So is the head. Also, apparently, the will to thrust. The matter certainly does not rest with us. Bigoted opponents must kill, deport, and imprison to the utmost of their power, and stop up ears, eyes, and nostrils as completely as they chose. The matter will still continue. When they have finished, we, as all others with true power and true commonsense, will still persist, perhaps (who knows ?) dragging our instruments over the legs outstretched *above* the so happily-occupied faces.

Hence this bitter and contradictory professional opposition, which, however, need scarcely concern us much longer. The matter has safely escaped the enemy. Music, born of the people, can now, by our means, return to the people. The people, whose birthright is whatever beauty exists, can now move freely wherever it is to be found. And so things will remain, now and henceforth, without serious let or hindrance from those whose mistaking view causes such foolish opposition.



## WOMEN AND MUSIC.

BY SYDNEY GREW.

The history of music, in so far as it is a record of things accomplished, proves that women in the past have revealed no genius for musical composition.

By arguing on the surface, men have therefore come to the conclusion that "woman" is fundamentally non-musical.

Exceptions are made to-day in the matter of performance, facts there being too strong to be resisted—though even in the matter of performance these exceptions are carried only to the point to which they are absolutely forced—but in the more vital matter of musical creation, it is still denied that women have any true power or faculty whatever.

Creatively also a change is to be noticed, however little the music due to it may be recognised; and at the present moment, therefore, the most satisfactory method of enquiring into the question of woman and music is, not to set out a list of female composers past and present (for the list would be a sadly barren one), but to study the nature of music on the one hand, and—in so far as she has revealed it in some non-musical art—the artistic nature of woman on the other.

### I.

The steps we must pursue in order to achieve this dual result are several; but before moving independently, and in order to get a clear grip of the matter, we must look into the conventional "theories" which surround it.

Fortunately for those of us who wish to come to close quarters with error, these conventional theories have been set out by Mr. George P. Upton, an American amateur musician and philosopher, in a book called "Woman in Music," published in 1909.

With reference to the emotionality underlying art in general and music in particular, Mr. Upton thus defines the nature of woman: "She is emotional by temperament and nature . . . emotion is as natural to her as breathing . . . her dominating element is emotion . . . she lives in emotion and acts from emotion . . . (and) she has a more delicate emotional force than man."

But, despite her possession of these essentially musical characteristics, woman cannot produce music (*i.e.*, she cannot "give outward expression to the mysterious and deeply hidden traits of her nature") because "she does not see the results of emotion as man looks at them," and because, unlike man, she cannot "control" this emotion and so give an "outward expression" to it. *She* "reaches results mainly by intuitions," *he* "by the slow processes of reason."

Mr. Upton supports the force of this "theory" by the remark that music as an art is "unrelentingly mathematical" and (in its higher forms) rigidly bound by rule, and as such demanding the exercise of reason as against the exercise of feeling.



He thereupon gives us the generalisation, "man is the intellect of music, woman its heart and soul," or (as it is expressed in a quotation Mr. Upton makes from a well-known novel) "The genius of musical composition is *homme*, and accept it as a compliment when I say you are essentially *femme*."

Mr. Upton is supported in his views by the remark of Anton Rubinstein that, while women lack the two chief essentials of art-creation, "subjectivity and initiative," the composer on the other hand has, and must always have, in large measure, "power of thought, concentration, absorption, largeness of emotional horizon, and freedom in outlining, *i.e.*, instinctive grasp of form."

What is affirmed, therefore, is that woman is without the nature needed for the production of any art demanding a large, impersonal, subjective vision.

Now, if it can be proved that woman has demonstrated the contrary in *any* art, the stability of all these theories will be utterly undermined.

What is the best art to observe for this purpose? It is admitted on every hand that women can and do write true and absolute poetry. For this reason, and for a multiplicity of other reasons that will appear in a moment, the non-musical art whereby we shall strive to comprehend the artistic nature of women will be poetry.

We must define the nature of art in general, so that the terms used later may be clear of meaning. (I must state very definitely that I do not offer the following as a complete answer to the questions, What is art? What is poetry? What is music? and the like. Such questions have been asked for untold generations. They can be answered only to the degree immediate circumstances demand. And however adequately answered, there is always room for quibblers to enter, and by turning everything back upon itself, to prove endless contradictions and inconsistencies. I write, however, in the hope that quibblers will leave this, and any other important matter, exclusively to the consideration of non-quibblers.)

## II.

Art, then, is an expression of thought or feeling, and the artist a person who, responding freely to the impressions of life and nature, is by temperament compelled to record his impressions for conveyance to other people.

Far back in the primary depths of the human mind is a vast, illimitable capacity of consciousness. As this capacity is exercised and developed, the primal sentience grows more tangible and definite, until it passes first into emotion, and then into thought.

Art in its first evolutionary stages concerns itself with more or less tangible thought: it is only when the artistic nature of man is well advanced that he can capture and record the vague outlines of abstract emotion.

Regarded from the standpoint of the human intellect, an artist's impressions therefore may be definite or indefinite. If definite, they result in art which expresses thought: if indefinite, in art which expresses feeling.

Definite thought expresses itself best in words, indefinite feeling (*i.e.*, emotion) best by other means—colour, form, sound, and the like. Hence the two most perfect and complete of all the arts are poetry and music.

Poetry is an expression of thought, music of feeling. There is, of course, much feeling and emotion in poetry, and not a little of that conscious intellectuality we call thought in music. Without deep emotion as a primary basis, poetry is not art, *i.e.*, it is not poetry; and without a clear-headed control of his feelings the composer cannot produce artistic music. But in the main the definition is correct: poetry stands for concrete thought, music for abstract feeling.

The mind of the musician moves in the world of greatest abstractions. Nothing in absolute music can be of concrete significance. The virtue of the art of music lies in its universality. The moment the musician's conception of things approaches the definitely tangible (*i.e.*, draws near to what could be expressed, for instance, in words), he ceases to be in touch with the essential purity of his art.

The mind of the poet, on the contrary, moves in the world of greatest concretions. In poetry, nothing may be of doubtful or indefinite meaning. The nature of poetic thought is certainty of knowledge. From the standpoint of personal belief in them, the facts stated may not even be argumentative. The moment the poet touches upon what is vague or doubtful, he falls backward towards the domain of music, or forward towards the world of prose.

### III.

Occasionally great poets speak of this. Browning was one of those who felt the uselessness of mere words in the expression of vast, universal thought. He often sets out the relative forces of music and poetry, but never so unequivocally as in the 61st stanza of "Fifine at the Fair." This passage runs,—

*Ah, Music, wouldst thou help! Words struggle with the weight  
So feebly of the False—thick element between  
Our soul (the True) and Truth! which, but that intervene  
False shows of things, were reached as easily by THOUGHT  
REDUCIBLE TO WORD, as now by YEARNINGS WROUGHT  
UP WITH THY FINE FREE FORCE, OH MUSIC, that canst thrid,  
Electrically win a passage through the lid  
Of earthly sepulchre, our words may push against,  
Hardly transpierce as thou!*

*Not DISSIPATE, thou deign'st,  
So much as tricksily ELUDE, what words attempt  
To heave away i' the mass, and let the soul—exempt  
From all that vapoury obstruction—view (instead  
Of glimmer underneath) a glory overhead.*

*Not feebly, like our PHRASE, against the barrier go  
In suspirative swell the authentic NOTES I know;  
By help whereof I would our souls were found without  
The pale, above the dense and dim which breeds the doubt!*

He excuses the long and involved nature of his style in the succeeding lines—

*And since to weary words recourse again must be,  
At least permit they rest their burthen here and there  
Music-like, cover space! . . . .  
Once fairly on the wing,  
Let me flap far and wide!*

In *Paracelsus*, Browning puts into the mouth of Aprile a lengthy assertion of the relative expressional values of music and other arts, reaching his climax in—

*This done, to perfect and consummate all,  
Even as a luminous haze links star to star,  
I would supply all chasms with music, breathing  
Mysterious motions of the soul, no way  
To be defined save in strange melodies.*

And finally, at the end of his life, he says (in *Charles Avison*)—

*. . . I state it thus :  
There is no truer truth obtainable  
By man than comes of music . . . .”\**

#### IV.

Comparatively little art exists in a state of unapproachable, indisturbable individuality. Its thought nearly always inclines towards some other art.

For instance, in poetry, Wordsworth's ode on "Immortality" has an emotional background that could be expressed in music; in painting, such pictures as those of G. F. Watts lose half their significance when the titles of them are not known; in music, half the efforts of composers like Richard Strauss are wasted upon anyone who has not previously learned and "placed" a verbal "programme."

But pure art nevertheless exists, and when it is found, no other outside art can add to the force and completeness of its expression.

We want no title, for example, to a Turner nature-picture or to a Frans Hals or Holbein portrait. Music to a Keats ode or a Shakespeare sonnet would be a gratuitous impertinence. Few musicians can do anything to expound further the moods of Tennyson. No method known to man could intensify the effects of the Brahms C minor symphony, or clarify the

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\*The above, in order to approach completeness, needs to follow on with a few remarks concerning the difference between the "thought" that results in poetry and the "thought" that results in music. The matter, however, would lead too far from the subject of women and music. I can do no more than warn the reader against imagining that music and poetry run along the same single line. They do not. At first they pursue parallel lines; but in the end they diverge completely, until (as is shown below) they reach points as extreme as the poles. There is a good description of *la pensee musicale* in Ernest Newman's "Musical Studies;" but the best of all expositions is in Browning's magnificent "parleying" with Charles Avison, sections 6, 7, and 8.



emotional thought at the back of the prelude and fugue in C sharp minor from the first part of Bach's "Wohltemperirtes Clavier." And, in architecture, the vision enshrined in Amiens Cathedral or York Minster is as far removed from the aid of other arts as the sun is from the earth.

But certain artists—poets in particular—often contrive no more than a mere hint of their thought. Many of the utterances of such passionate souls as Shelley absolutely demand the completing aid of music. The same is occasionally the case with the expressions of men of supreme genius, the value of the attendant artist (as musician upon poet) being determined by the depth and penetration with which he discovers and reveals new truths and significances in the already expressed thoughts.

There are thus two types of poetry—the pure, self-contained, absolute type, and the larger, more expansive, less finite type. The latter draws out towards music, and is the class forming the basis of great songs, oratorios, and cantatas. For the moment, the one may be referred to as "absolute" poetry, and the other as "non-absolute" poetry. (The reader can strengthen the truth of this definition by considering the circumstance that all poets of the latter class love and understand music, and enjoy the spectacle of their words in association with music, while poets of the former class are either insensitive to music or else regard it conventionally, and invariably object to their art being "distorted" into musical settings.)

What we have to discover is whether women can produce "non-absolute" poetry.

## V.

The difference between absolute and non-absolute poetry can be most quickly illustrated by two short poems (one from Tennyson and one from Walt Whitman) dealing roughly with the same subject.

In "Tears, idle tears," the thought is narrowed down to a close, unexpansive, personal vision. It is as it were of domestic application. The words mean what they say, and in no way does the poem stir our souls with a sense of indefinable, illimitable significance.\*

In "Tears, tears, tears," everything is different. The poem means far more than the words convey. In fact, the words do not convey any absolutely tangible meaning at all; and thus we perceive that Whitman has broken the bounds of pure poetry, and ranged off towards music. That is to say, the vision at work is large, expansive, impersonal, and of an unlimited universality of application.

- (a) *Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,  
Tears from the depths of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.*

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\*This is not to disparage a poem which I myself imagine will live longer than the English language.



*Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail  
That bring our friends up from the under-world,—  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.*

*Ah, sad and strange as, in dark summer dawns,  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.*

*Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd  
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.*

(b) *Tears ! tears ! tears !  
In the night, in solitude, tears,  
On the white shore dripping, dripping, suck'd in by the sand :  
Tears,—not a star shining, all dark and desolate,—  
Moist tears from the eyes of a muffled head.*

*O who is that ghost, that form in the dark, with tears ?  
What shapeless lump is that, bent, crouch'd there on the sand ?—  
Streaming tears, sobbing tears, throes, choked with wild cries.*

*O storm, embodied, rising, careering with swift steps along the beach !  
O wild and dismal night-storm, with wind—O belching and desperate !  
O shade so sedate and decorous by day, with calm countenance and  
regulated pace ;  
But away at night as you fly, none looking, O then the unloosen'd  
ocean of tears !  
Tears ! tears ! \**

## VI.

The "vision" displayed in the Whitman piece is that characteristic of the musical mind.

As music (*vide* Mr. Upton) is understood to be the property of the masculine mind, the vision which goes to the production of music may be termed the "masculine vision."

The other vision, with its all-pervading sense of a local, domestic personality, is said to be characteristic of the nature of woman.

It may, therefore, be termed the "feminine vision." (The reader may further note that all poets of the Keats and Tennyson type are termed "feminine.")

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\*To get to the heart of this, take the "ghost"—the "shapeless lump"—as a human being ; and look for such contrasts as the "*moist tears*" and the pitiless white sand.

To apply these terms at once, we may say that absolute music (such as Bach's) is the product of the masculine vision, while absolute poetry (such as Tennyson's) is the outcome of the feminine vision; and, on the other hand, that poetry of the Browning and Walt Whitman type is the product of the masculine vision, while music of the Chopin and Mendelssohn type is the product of the feminine. In general, the one is of dramatic force, the other of lyrical.

What we have to discover is, whether women produce that poetry which is the outcome of the masculine vision.

## VII.

The masculine vision would naturally be exercised most by poets in the contemplation of such large subjects as war and death or (in nature) of such vast matters as the sea, night, sun-set, and the like.

For our present purposes, sea-poetry is the best to draw upon for illustration. It will be well to see first what men poets have done here.

Of all who have ever written, Walt Whitman has drawn probably the largest lessons from the sea, and been stirred by it to the most profound emotions. His "Rise, O days, from your fathomless deeps," perhaps the superbest example of sea-poetry in existence, should be read in conjunction with William Watson's splendid, but very different, "Hymn to the Sea." Other Whitman poems where the sea, or the ships of the sea, are made the purveyors of universal truths, are "Passage to India" and "O Star of France," and the wonderful sequence of poems entitled "Sea-drift."

The difference between Tennyson and Whitman is strikingly enforced by their sea-poetry, two brief examples being the exquisite lyric "Break, Break, Break" (a), and the second number of "Sea-drift," from which a few lines are quoted (b).

(a) *Break, break, break*  
*On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!*  
*And I would that my tongue could utter*  
*The thoughts that arise in me.*

*O well for the fisherman's boy,*  
*That he shouts with his sister at play!*  
*O well for the sailor-lad,*  
*That he sings in his boat on the bay!*

*And the stately ships go on*  
*To their haven under the hill;*  
*But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,*  
*And the sound of a voice that is still!*

*Break, break, break,*  
*At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!*  
*But the tender grace of a day that is dead*  
*Will never come back to me.*

- (b) *As I wend to the shores I know not,  
As I list to the dirge, the voices of men and women wreck'd,  
As I inhale the impalpable breezes that set in upon me,  
As the ocean so mysterious rolls toward me closer and closer,  
I too but signify at the utmost a little wash'd-up drift,  
A few sands and dead leaves to gather,  
Gather, and merge myself as part of the sands and drift . . .  
Ebb, ocean of life, the flow will return . . .  
I mean tenderly by you and all.*

VIII.

Let us now see if women possess this large, expansive, impersonal vision of the sea.

The question is, Can women remain in artistic contemplation of such universal subjects as the sea, death, sorrow, and the like, and express their thoughts without any intrusion, either of personal matters, or of other matters of domestic, non-universal character?

We must commence with Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who worked from 1830 to 1860, i.e., in the first generation of the "higher education" of women.

Her forerunners gave us beautiful poetry of a domestic order (such as "Woodman, spare that tree" and "The Old Arm-chair"), and, of course, a large amount of love and religious and elegiac poetry, though none ever touched real magnitude of conception; and undoubtedly it was Mrs. Browning who gave us the first great modern poetry of women.

Her earliest sea-poem is the "Sea-side Meditation" of 1833. She writes here in the rhetorical style. But however big her ideas and descriptions, she spoils the effect continually by the inclusion of comparatively small illustrations. The similes in the following are certainly not universal in their effect:

- (a) *So, o'er thy deeps, I brooded and must brood,  
Whether I view thee in thy dreadful peace,  
LIKE A SPENT WARRIOR HANGING IN THE SUN  
HIS GLITTERING ARMS, AND MEDITATING DEATH.  
Or whether thy wild visage gathereth shades  
What time thou marshall'st forth thy waves who hold  
A covenant of storms, then roar and wind  
Under the racking rocks; AS MARTYRS LIE  
WHEEL-BOUND; AND, DYING, UTTER LOFTY WORDS!*

Her second sea-poem, the "Sea-side Walk," dates from 1838. Here she has discarded rhetoric, and increased her powers of description; but she still breaks the largeness of her picture by the smallness of her deductions or sequels, as is shown in the pendant to the following beautiful lines:

*The sky above us showed  
A universal and unmoving cloud  
On which the cliffs permitted us to see  
Only the outline of their majesty,  
AS MASTER-MINDS WHEN GAZED AT BY THE CROWD.*



This same vastness fills the body of the poem ; but in the end it is all " fused " into the narrow intimacy of

*. . . the plaintive speaking that we used  
Of absent friends and memories unforsook ;  
And had we seen each other's face we had  
Seen haply each was sad ;*

which is exactly of the emotional calibre of " Break, break, break," though immeasurably below it in beauty.

The " Sabbath Morning at Sea " (1850) is well-known in consequence of its inclusion in Elgar's " Sea-Pictures." It tells of a ship sailing into the grand solemnity of the morning, to superb description :—

*The new sight, the new wondrous sight !  
The waters round me, turbulent,  
The skies impassive o'er me,  
Calm in a moonless, sunless light,  
Half glorified by that intent  
Of holding the day-glory !*

But Mrs. Browning cannot " exult in only Nature " ; her thoughts turn to those at home who are just on the moment of entering church, and she strives to join with them in simultaneous prayer.

Here, then, we see the beginning of the great masculine power, but applied only to description and observation, not to that larger use which is called " Vision."

The next woman-poet—the worker of the second generation—is Christina Rossetti. Her creative years run from 1845 to 1894.

Both these women were invalids for many years of their lives, and so both had the leisure for brooding which a universal view of things more or less demands. As Christina Rossetti was not so unaccountably energetic as her predecessor, nor so intellectually vehement, we may expect to find in her a purer development of this sustained masculine vision.

In a sea-poem dating from 1853 (" Sleep at Sea ") she tells of sailors sleeping as their boat drives to destruction. Here is the verse describing their unconscious dreams—

*Oh soft the streams drop music  
Between the hills,  
And musical the birds' nests  
Beside those rills :  
The nests are types of home  
Love-hidden from ills,  
The nests are types of spirits  
Love-music fills.*

This is entirely impersonal. There is not a touch of domesticity in it, and the last verse, with its

*They sleep to death in dreaming  
Of length of days,*

but bears this out completely.

We can learn a good deal from a curious little poem written in 1858 :—

*Why does the sea moan evermore ?  
Shut out from heaven it makes its moan,  
It frets against the boundary shore :  
All earth's full rivers cannot fill  
The sea, that drinking thirsteth still.*

*Sheer miracles of loveliness  
Lie hid in its unlooked on bed :  
Anemones, salt, passionless,  
Blow flower-like, just enough alive  
To blow and multiply and thrive.*

*Shells quaint with curve or spot or spike,  
Encrusted live things argus-eyed,  
All fair alike yet all unlike,  
Are born without a pang, and die  
Without a pang, and so pass by.*

The vision there is masculine—it is still a little indefinite, still without clearly applied use. The great difference between Christina Rossetti and Walt Whitman is seen at once if this poem be compared with his “The world below the brine”—but the difference is excusable when we remember that the one comes from the descendant of Homer, the other from the descendant of Eliza Cook.

An important point to note is that originally this poem contained three other stanzas, in which (W. M. Rossetti tells us) there was a “much more decided personal note,” the importance lying in the proof this affords of the writer’s sense of the unfitness of a personal, or “feminine,” note in a universal picture.

#### VIII.

Christina Rossetti, however, and all women poets, might be expected to display the masculine vision best in directions where women have always laboured successfully. Her group of “Death” poems of 1849 are very nearly as wonderfully “masculine” as Walt Whitman’s.\* The sonnet “Rest” may be quoted :

*O Earth, lie heavily upon her eyes ;  
Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching, Earth ;  
Lie close around her ; leave no room for mirth  
With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs.  
She hath no questions, she hath no replies,  
Hushed in and curtained with a blessed dearth  
Of all that irked her from the hour of birth,*

---

\*The fundamental difference between the feminine vision of Tennyson and the masculine vision of Whitman is shown in their death poetry, the two most conspicuous examples being “In Memoriam” and “Memories of President Lincoln.”

*With stillness that is almost Paradise.  
Darkness more clear than noon-day holdeth her,  
Silence more musical than any song ;  
Even her very heart has ceased to stir :  
Until the morning of Eternity  
Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be ;  
And when she wakes she will not think it long.*

Through those lines is the spirit which only the musician can surpass, and he would be a great composer indeed who could give to them the choral background they need.

I cannot follow this point any further ; it must suffice to say that the gift is in the possession of many women poets to-day, who exercise it in most unexpected directions.

Nothing could be more wonderfully complete than this sad lyric of Ada Smith's—a personal note, if ever one was written, but expressed with an unbroken insight into the souls of all the grief-stricken mortals who have moved over the earth's surface, and so undisturbedly “masculine” : —

IN CITY STREETS.

*Yonder in the heather there's a bed for sleeping,  
Drink for one a-thirst, ripe blackberries to eat ;  
Yonder in the sun the merry hares go leaping,  
And the pool is clear for travel-wearied feet.*

*Sorely throb my feet, a-tramping London highways  
( Ah ! the springy moss upon a northern moor ! ),  
Through the endless streets, the gloomy squares and byways,  
Homeless in the city, poor among the poor !*

*London streets are gold—ah, give me leaves a-glinting  
'Midst grey dykes and hedges in the autumn sun !  
London water's wine, poured out for all unstinting—  
God ! for the little brooks that tumble as they run !*

*Oh, my heart is fain to hear the soft wind blowing,  
Soughing through the fir-tops up on northern fells !  
Oh, my eye's an-ache to see the brown burns flowing  
Through the peaty soil and tinkling heather bells.*

“Woman” thererore is in possession of the “vision” which produces music.

(To be continued.)



## THE STUDENTS' PAGE.

### II.

In sequel to our general remarks upon the matter of rhythmical playing (*Piano-Player Review*, March issue, page 296, section 4, to page 300, section 2), we give an initial series of pieces for study.

Our instructive treatment of music here is confined to the use of the pedals. Finished performance is impossible without use of touch-levers or buttons, sustaining-pedal, and tempo-lever; and the student will eventually be guided, either by himself, or by subsequent remarks we may make, as to a complementary use of the latter: but for a time he should follow our directions, since it may be taken for axiomatic that until the accentual, rhythmic, and dynamic features of the music have been proved producible by unaided pedalling, other details of player-pianism are merest automata. Spontaneous life exists in the pedals alone, nowhere else. The sustaining-pedal cannot clear away bad tone; the touch-lever is but a stolid substitute for the nervous exaltation of open wind pressure; even the *tempo rubato* (an ever-present, ever-essential quality in musical performance) is useless in face of a deformed rhythm. As a builder shapes stone before his winch drops it into place, so the player-pianist must intellectually chisel and artistically refine his material before he tries to establish a completed structure of sound.

Therefore, all pieces of music, however complex, must be gradually reduced to their simpler proportions, by all performers, however gifted, before mechanical details are brought into operation.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is radically impossible to offer directions applicable to all instruments. Not only do instruments of different make vary in demands upon the player; but even the same instrument may seem to change its very nature from day to day. What supplies the demand one day may be under- or over-sufficient the next. This feature (common in its artistic results to a similar feature of the organ) makes it impossible to lay down hard and fast "pedalling." Broad indications only are possible, which must be adapted and modified by individual students to suit circumstances.

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**THE STUDENTS' PAGE** is a department of the *Piano-Player Review* established for the use of serious player-pianists. The main features of player-piano technique will be expounded month by month, and technical and æsthetic difficulties solved for correspondents. . . .

Readers are asked to bear in mind that "serious" player-pianists are not of necessity students of advanced music, and that (in accordance with our "Editorial" in the February issue) we are anxious to stimulate imagination and increase knowledge, even in most rudimentary directions.

## THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

For a number of reasons, the beginner, before setting out upon his course of practice, should experiment a brief while. He should run through a few pieces; first, in order to acquire the "knack" of moving his feet in regular alternation; secondly, in order to test the extent of his natural sense of rhythmic; and, thirdly, in order to sound the depths of the artistic matter he is confronted with.

\* \* \* \* \*

The student, therefore, may spend a few days in an attempt to draw from himself something approaching intelligence in connection with the following:—

- WAGNER: *O Star of Eve* (Angelus, 356843; Broadwood, S2882; Perforated, X462; Pianola, L3060).
- SCHUBERT: *Erl-King* (Angelus, 15036; Broadwood, S724; Pianola, 9064).
- MOSZKOWSKI: *Spanish Dances* (a) in A major (Angelus, 45037; Broadwood, S2786; Perforated, X2802; Pianola, 8611), (b) in G minor (Angelus, 45029; Broadwood, S2784; Perforated, X56; Pianola, 8590).
- *Serenade* (Angelus, 45056; Broadwood, S2454; Perforated, X10; Pianola, 8713).
- GRIEG: *Daybreak* (Angelus, 15015; Broadwood, S1986; Perforated, O1120; Pianola, 9017).
- HANDEL: *Dead March* (Angelus, 88241; Broadwood, S594; Perforated, X2086; Pianola, 7547).
- *Hallelujah Chorus* (Angelus, 52204; Broadwood, 88115; Perforated, X859; Pianola, 7577).
- JOHANN STRAUSS: *Pizzicato Polka* (Angelus, 25292; Broadwood, S2028; Perforated, X4; Pianola, 8441).
- BACH: *Gigue* (Angelus, 15265; Perforated, X1950; Pianola, 9370).
- *Presto giocoso* (Angelus, 15249; Broadwood, S440; Perforated, X1952; Pianola, 9339).
- *My heart ever faithful* (Angelus, 65098; Perforated, X1953; Pianola, 1347).
- *F Major Organ Toccata and Fugue* (Angelus, 15149; Perforated, X1955; Pianola, 9071).
- DAQUIN: *Le Coucou Rondeau* (Angelus, 45915; Perforated, X2154; Pianola, 8612).
- BIZET: *Toreador's Song* (Angelus, 35340; Broadwood, S2916; Perforated, X7; Pianola, ).

\* \* \* \* \*

Before actually commencing his observation of musical rhythm, the student may prove for himself the need of such observation by playing two pieces—the scherzo from Beethoven's "*Symphony in D major*" (Angelus, 15586; Broadwood, —; Perforated, X4200; Pianola, 65487), and Chopin's "*Bolero*," (Angelus, 15096; Broadwood, —; Perforated, X1310; Pianola, 9449)—and noting how, while in the former he never loses sight of the perpetual 1 2 3 1 2 3 of the music, in the other, on the contrary, despite the circumstance that much of it is as simple as a waltz, he is continually losing it, sometimes for quite long phrases. . . .

All but the simplest music has the same rhythmical variety as this Chopin bolero. The persistent object of the student must be to discover the prime rhythmic germ of the piece, and to trace back to that source all the variety which, growing out of it, makes the piece what it is.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two main types of pedalling exist, which, depending as they do upon two main types of music, for the present may be given the same names; *i.e.*, *legato*, and *staccato*.

The legato style is the first to be mastered.

\* \* \* \* \*

Beethoven, Sonata\* No. 2, second movement, *largo appassionata* (Angelus, 16223; Broadwood, S2522; Perforated, X2702; Pianola, L2486B). The first piece of music the student may set out to study is the slow movement from Beethoven's second pianoforte sonata. It was written in 1796, when the composer was 26 years old; but, though of the 18th century, it sounds the rich tones, and contains the passionate beauty, which were to be so characteristic of the coming generation. It serves well, therefore, as introduction to music itself.

The pulsations (or accentual beats) of the piece are in order

1 2	3 4	5 6
1 2	3-4	5-6
1-2	3-4	5 6

etc., slow and heavy, and of organ-like breadth. In the beginning of the piece, these beats are marked by short bass notes. Each group of six represents a bar. At the 8th bar there comes a cadence, or close, which has the force of a "full stop" (.) in poetry.

The student must arrest the movement of the roll when he gets to this "full close" by bringing the tempo lever sharply to zero; and, returning to the beginning, repeat this opening sentence time after time, until he can feel the weight of each pulse, and note the onward progression of each bar, from the initial note to the final (*i.e.*, to the 45th beat of the sentence).

\* \* \* \* \*

(There are *six* beats in each bar, and *eight* bars in the sentence. The student might therefore expect to find 48 beats in the sentence. Normally, however, a sentence ends on the *first* beat of its last bar, not on the *last*.) It will be observed that the present cadence is not complete until the third beat of the 8th bar. The bass note of the cadence, however, comes on the first beat.

As the student goes over the ground of this opening sentence, he will notice that a cadence occurs in the 4th bar. (The 4th bar contains nothing after the cadential chord except a downward progression in the bass.) This middle cadence is not a "full-close," but a "half-close," the equivalent of a comma (,).

\*See page 325 P.P.R. (March issue).



The simplest form of musical sentence consists thus of two halves, the first poised upon a half-close, the whole upon a full, as is the following verbal sentence :

*When Byron's eyes were shut in death,  
We bow'd our head and held our breath.*

Moreover, the middle and final cadences of a musical sentence have a mutual balance, a give-and-take, a statement and response, which is the exact parallel (both in sound and sense) of the verse-rhymes of poetry. The mind of the reader carries him on without rest from "death" to "breath" : the mind of the musician carries him on in the same manner from the "half-close" to the "full-close."

The student cannot reckon he is in full understanding of this Beethoven sentence until he knows where he is in it as well as he knows where he is at any given moment in the Matthew Arnold sentence.

The above opening sentence must be borne in mind as the symbol (a).

An interludial phrase of four bars follows the opening sentence (a) of the *largo*, commencing on the 4th pulse of the 8th bar, and closing on the 6th pulse of the 12th. It contains within itself twenty-seven pulses. On the first beat (the words "beat" and "pulse" are here used interchangeably) of the 4th bar is a close equivalent to a colon (:); but the remaining pulsations of this interludial phrase are a subsiding into what follows it ; and this portion of the music has therefore the same continuative force as

*He taught us little : but our soul . . .*

What we have so far of this piece of music is consequently akin (in physical balance and in intellectual import) to

(a) { *When Byron's eyes were shut in death,  
We bow'd our head and held our breath.*

(b) *He taught us little : but our soul . . .*

The interludial phrase may be considered as (b).

As in the poem, so in the *largo*, a concluding sentence is necessary. The natural laws of art make the concluding sentence of the *largo* (c) an extended repeat of the opening sentence (a). Therefore, this concluding sentence (c) is the recapitulatory equivalent of (a) ; and, since the symbolised presentment of the passage becomes

$$a : b : c = a$$

the student at the outset of his work discovers eternal principles which affect music as laws of gravitation affect inanimate matter—principles of dual response under ternary pressure.

The concluding sentence (c) is seven bars long (*i.e.*, it contains 21 pulsations). It is not made up of two halves, as is the opening sentence (a) ; but, instead, it is built up sequentially to a climax on the first beat of its 6th bar.

This is the "climax" of the portion of the *largo* now in hand. It must be felt anticipatorily, and gradually attained (though by spiritual means rather than by physical) right from the initiatory note of the movement.

The concluding sentence, therefore, has no middle cadence; but as it closes with a full cadence, it fulfils the office of

. . . *Had felt him like the thunder's roll.*

To have an exact parallel between the poetry and the music, the fourth line of the former would have to be extended cumulatively into two lines, as in a varied repetition of the first line; the whole thus reading something like

(a) { *When Byron's eyes were shut in death,*  
*We bow'd our head and held our breath.*

(b) *He taught us little: but our soul*

(c) *Ere Byron's eyes were shut had felt and known him like the THUNDER's roll.\**

The above represents the first part of Beethoven's movement. As it is a full expository presentation of the themes and ideas of the music, it may be called the "exposition." As it is the first part of the piece as a whole, it may be symbolised **A**.

It should be fully learnt before a further move forward is made.

The next section is a four-bar melody. The beats here, though not rigidly marked, are still clear. The melody commences on the 4th beat of the bar preceding its first **1**. It closes on the first beat of the fourth of its bars; i.e., on its fourth **1**. The cadence is perfect (i.e., the close is not a half-close).

This four-bar passage is a noble digression from the main tonality. Its grave beauty is exquisite.

What follows is a repeat (varied) of the same melody.

The repeat, however, is interrupted in the 3rd bar by a new melody. (The first note of this comes on the 19th pulsation after the above full cadence.) The new melody pours along over six bars. There is an explosive climax at its 30th pulse; after which the music descends into a full repeat of the opening sections (**A**).

The section last described stands as **B**. The full repeat of **A** that now ensues might be symbolised **C**, but more correctly **A**, the movement so far unfolded standing as

**A : B : C = A**

The section which now ensues is the balance of **B**. It contains two sentences (a) and (b), linked as by a comma (i.e., with a half-close).

\*The student must not try to fit these Arnold words to the Beethoven music. They could be made to fit; but only at the cost of distorting both music and words, since the music is *triple*, and the poetry *duple*. The writer could have selected a poem of which the accents would have fallen in with the accents of the music; but had he done so, the beauty of the music would have been lost, for *that* beauty is absolute, abstract, non-intellectual, while the beauty of the *words* is exactly the reverse.

Its first sentence (*a*) is eight bars long, falling into two halves, both with a downward progression. The former half closes full, with the melody moving from the 5th of the scale to the 1st (in solfa notation, from *soh* to *doh*). The latter half is a decorated repeat of the former. It leads continuatively into the second sentence (*b*) of the present section.

This second sentence (*b*) consists of a passionate setting-out\* of the primary melody (**A**), loud and heavy, with a ponderously rolling bass. Its close comes in seven bars ; after which a gentler oscillation in the music leads into the final section of the *largo*.

This balance to **B** is to be definitely termed **C**. The movement, therefore, is to be set out—

**A — B — A — C —**

What follows is a delicate re-appearance of the first sentence (*a*) of the first section **A**, with a peaceful close of five bars. The whole of this final section covers thirteen bars.

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*

Read largely, the form of the *largo* responds to some such plan as

Introduction	...	...	Bars	1—19
Section <b>A</b>	...	...	„	20—50
„ <b>B</b>	...	...	„	51—80†

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*

The present writer has personally reduced this *largo* to its minutest proportions, and then expanded it along the more contracted lines of poetry. The result, though not a translation of the *mood* of the music, is an exact reflection of its *form*.

For convenience of comparison line by line, the *largo* is set out with its phrases barred and labelled (*a*) (*b*) (*c*), etc. :—

( <i>a</i> ) Bars 1—8	A {	{ ( <i>a</i> ) Bars 20—23	B {	{ ( <i>a</i> ) Bars 51—54
( <i>b</i> ) „ 9—12		{ ( <i>b</i> ) „ 24—26		{ ( <i>b</i> ) „ 54—57
( <i>c</i> ) „ 13—19		{ ( <i>c</i> ) „ 27—31		{ ( <i>c</i> ) „ 58—64
		{ ( <i>d</i> ) „ 32—39		{ ( <i>d</i> ) „ 65—67
		{ ( <i>e</i> ) „ 40—43		{ ( <i>e</i> ) „ 68—75
		{ ( <i>f</i> ) „ 44—50		{ ( <i>f</i> ) „ 76—80

The verbal reflection of the above is :—

{	( <i>a</i> )	Man may not live by bread alone!
{	( <i>b</i> )	The spirit sees,
{	( <i>c</i> )	Man may not live by bread alone.

\*In the minor.

†The student must remember that the first bar of the number set out for a phrase or section in the first “1” of the beats. This first “1” is generally preceded by a number of unaccented beats (in many cases by as many as “2 3 4 5 6”).



A	{	(a)	<i>The truer food ?</i>
		(b)	<i>'Tis finer far</i>
		(c)	<i>Than fleshly body takes : Ah, know</i>
	{	(d)	<i>Man may not live by bread alone !</i>
		(e)	<i>The spirit sees,</i>
		(f)	<i>Man may not live by bread alone.</i>
B	{	(a)	<i>'Tis brotherhood !</i>
		(b)	<i>A steady star</i>
		(c)	<i>That lights the joy in common woe—</i>
		(d)	<i>Yea, though</i>
	{	(e)	<i>Man may not live by bread alone,</i>
		(f)	<i>Love may atone.</i>

The student, when he has memorised the music as completely as he could memorise the foregoing imitative poem, can test his apprehension of the music (and also the perfect inevitability of the music itself) by some such equivalent action as the following: Take phrases (a), (b), (c), of **A** and (a), (b), (c), of **B**, and play (or rather *think*) them, in the order **A** (a), **B** (a), **A** (b), (c), **B** (b), (c).

In the verses, this juggling produces :

*The truer food ?*  
*'Tis brotherhood !*  
*'Tis finer far*  
*Than fleshly body takes : Ah, know*  
*A steady star*  
*That lights the joy in common woe—*

which, with a few insignificant verbal alterations, would be at least as sensible as the original, if not as varied and artistic.

Similar sensibility follows the equivalent transposition of the parallel phrases of the music.

Other transpositions are possible, both of *largo* and poem, but such are not to be given here. The one illustration should suffice to lay before the student a golden rule.—All art-works are mentally reducible to a point of infinitude, around which their component parts and phrases play in well-nigh any order.

All great music has this strange diversity. The progression of the artist's mind consists in first grasping the physical form of the art-work, and then in passing beyond this into the realm of spiritual contours.

\* \* \* \* \*

Between 1650 and 1750, a universal principle obtained in the alternation of sections in cyclic compositions, whereby a slow movement stood linked with a faster one immediately following.

This technical sentence must be loosened a little :—

The earliest composers of instrumental music discovered that the best effects were gained, not by having separate slow movements and separate quick ones, but, by having a slow movement in companionship with a

quick one. Many ancient instrumental works, therefore, are entitled "Adagio and Allegro," "Introduction and Fugato," "Grave and Allegro," "Largo and Presto," and the like. When composers linked together two such groups, they created the pre-Beethoven sonata, of which the form was (roughly):—

- A Introduction and Allegro ;
- B Adagio and Finale.

The pre-Beethoven class of music came to an end in 1750. Composers then began to write sonatas in which the balance of movements was :

- A Allegro moderato ;
- B Adagio ;
- C Allegro Finale.

Before long, however, the need was felt for something to act, either as intermezzo between the Adagio (B) and the Finale (C), or as animating pendant to the Adagio.

What was adopted was an old dance, the minuet.

The form of the sonata, when fully developed, then stood :

- A Allegro moderato and Adagio ;
- B Minuet and Finale.

The general emotional weight of the whole matter agreeing with the general emotional weight of the older pre-Beethoven form.

Here, in Beethoven's second sonata, the minuet is as a bright pendant to the passionate Largo. It is called "Scherzo."

In sonata form, a minuet is always two-fold. There are, indeed, two minuets, A and B; and as the first is repeated after the second, the outline of the minuet becomes :

A — B — C = A

\* \* \* \*

Beethoven, Sonata No. 2, *Scherzo* (Angelus 16223 ; Broadwood, S2522 ; Perforated Music Co., X2703 ; Pianola, L2486B\*).

The rhythm of this movement is triple

3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2.

The opening beat is divided into four notes, the fifth note of the *motive* (i.e., the first "1" of the above table) bearing the accent.

This five-note *motive* comes three times successively. It is rounded off by a half-close ("comma")—three full chords, the last filling two beats (as indicated above 1, 2).

The phrase thus described is repeated from other notes of the scale. This second phrase comes to a full close.

The student must learn this 8-bar sentence thoroughly before proceeding further.

---

\*The Pianola roll, No. 77745 (superseded 1912), is defective in the Scherzo.

In order to feel the physical weight of the accented note, the student may first play the *motive* very slowly, and on firm pressure. When playing fast, and on the required light pressure, the accented note must be brought out by a short, swift, pedal-beat (almost a pedal-“jerk”). The second beat of the bar (2) is occupied by a soft, subdued chord. This must not bear any of the *sforzato* of the single accented note (1). If the chord comes out noisily, the performer is to blame. The tone could quite easily be controlled (for the chord) by the “touch-buttons”; but such means are mechanical. With practice, the student will find that, his accent being effected on a light pressure, its force will be exhausted by the time the second pulse, with its soft, rich chord, is due to appear.

For the cadential chords of this sentence, the tone should swell richly up to the “1,” and subside for the “2,” of  $\widehat{1, 2}$ , all on open pressure.

When the student resumes his progression beyond the full-close, he will find the first sentence (a) is repeated.

A fresh eight-bar sentence (b) follows the “repeat.” This is a development of the first (a). It swells up into two full-closes, one at the 4th bar, and one at the 8th. It also must be individually mastered.

Added to the normal eight bars this sentence (b) is a cadential pendant of 3 bars, falling from *fortissimo* to a sudden *piano*. It must be learnt on heavy pressure, and with observation of the silent beats.

0,  $\widehat{1, 2}$ , 0, 0,  $\widehat{2, 3}$ , 1, - -

To this eleven-bar sentence is added a lyrical melody of twelve bars, the last of which is silent.

We thus have so far,—sentence **A** (eight bars), and sentence **B** (twenty-three bars.)

What follows on **B** is a twelve-bar repeat of sentence **A**, preceded by two silent beats.

Thus the superficial structure of the Scherzo is :

**A — B — C = A.**

But, emotionally, the structure of this minuet is different. The true centre of the piece is in the 11th bar of sentence **B** (at the close of the “pendant”). If a pre-Beethoven composer had been writing this music, say for a suite, he would have (1) gone straight on from the first bar of the movement to the nineteenth, and (2) having repeated those nineteen bars, he would then (3) have continued on with the remaining twenty-five, finally (4) repeating the latter. He would thereby have achieved the balance **A—B**.

The second minuet (the trio) of Beethoven’s Scherzo is a simple matter. It consists of (a) an eight-bar sentence, repeated, and (b) a 16-bar sentence, also repeated.

After the trio comes the first minuet, exactly as before, except that the “repeats” are not made.

Thus the outer framework of this movement is the “**A - B - A**” without opportunity of reduction to **A - B**. The minuet and trio remaining the least



organic detail of sonata-form, it was the last to submit itself to the binary pressure. Eventually, however, it fell into line with the other movements of sonatas and symphonies, and definitely lost in ternary character.

\* \* \* \*

For recreation, the student may spend a few minutes over three Chopin preludes. (a) No. 19, in E flat major (Angelus, 15427); Broadwood, L25217; Perforated, X1489; Pianola, 9331) belongs to the class of music that almost plays itself. All the student needs to do—at this stage of his work—is to retain a clear sense of the self-evident rhythm and mark the accents lightly yet well. The pedalling to be at the rate of three in a bar, short, sharp and decisive.

(b) No. 23, in F major. (Angelus, 15116; Broadwood, S2116; Perforated X1864; Pianola, 9289) is a short piece of the simplest character. It ripples along its course of twenty-two bars without break or hesitation; and all the student has to do is to pedal four deep (yet not heavy or forceful) beats in each bar. The same full yet delicate tone must be maintained throughout.

(c) The G minor Prelude, No. 22, Broadwood, S2114; Perforated X1490; Pianola, 9330) may also be played in this manner—two strong beats to a bar, the underlying movement in the bass well marked.

\* \* \* \*

Mendelssohn's "Volkslied," the 23rd of the "Songs without words"\* (Angelus, 15348; Broadwood, L25233; Perforated, X2742; Pianola, 1002) is a perfect study for artistic pedalling in elementary grade. The student who, without mechanical assistance, can throw out the contrasting phrases of the music, will not only have acquired an important insight into music; he will also have proved himself a naturally gifted player-pianist.

This "folk-song" is squarely chordal, and moves as compactly as a march. Introducing it, however, and appearing interludially between certain of the phrases, is a harp-like passage of different (though no less inspiringly animated) character.

The fundamental rhythm of the music is 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4.

The movement of the prelude is a little broken: on the second and fourth beats ("2" and "4") come soft, unaccented chords; in the treble, an unaccompanied *motive* of six notes, of which the fourth, appearing invariably on the first or third beats ("1" or "3"), naturally bears accent.

This *motive* could be expressed:

. . . 1 . . 0 . . . 3 . . 0 . . . 1 . . 0, etc.

the soft accompanimental chords occurring at the points marked "0."

The prelude commences, not on the first note of the *motive*, but on the second:—

. . . 1 . . 0 . . . 3 . . 0

The student must learn the *motive* in slow time, and on a heavy pressure. It occurs eleven times, culminating in a rapid downward rush to a single low note.

This last note should be caught and held for a moment by the tempo-lever, in order to prevent the abrupt effect otherwise inevitable.

When the prelude is familiar, it must be played quickly and delicately, and marked upon its accents by the short, sharp pedal-beat, which (described above) affects none but the individual note aimed at.

Should the student find this technical point insuperably difficult, he may rest content with this truism—as soon as he himself, by artistic mentality, conceives the accentual nature of the *motive*, so soon will he produce it without conscious physical effort.

The song itself now commences, lead into dramatically by the concluding *crescendo* of the prelude. Its spirit is *allegro con fuoco*; but the student will be ill-advised to light the fire before he has laid coal and sticks. The song, therefore, must be learnt without *fuoco*.

The opening sentence covers nine bars, *i.e.*, in counting to it, nine of the "1's" of the "1 2 3 4's" are encountered. It begins on the "4" preceding the first "1." There is a half-close (or "comma"-cadence) at the 4th bar, and a full-close at the 9th. In the latter, the final chord of the cadence comes on "3." (This feature is invariable, every cadence so closing.)

There is a "false"-cadence at the "1" of the eighth bar. When partly familiar with the sentence, the student may test the effect of this cadence by sharply bringing over the tempo-lever to zero on the instant the first chord of that bar is struck. The object of realising this false-cadence is, to grasp the forceful influence of the bar which extends the sentence from the normal 8 to the present 9 bars. (To a musician, such extra bars have a meaning somewhat analogous to the meaning the extra foot added to the ninth line of the Spenserian stanza has to a poet.)

The music of the "Volkslied" does not move squarely in chords of uniform length. For instance, in the second bar the beats "2 3" are occupied by the same chord. But the fundamental rhythm is as clear as a band-march. If the student were pacing this sentence, he would, starting off on the first note with an unaccented pace (L R, L R, L R, etc), cover thirty-six paces by the time he reached the close of the opening sentence.

Immediately upon the suspended close that ends the first sentence (or line) of the song comes the prelude again. Here it contains four "1's."

The second line of the song is picked up abruptly, the soft accompanimental chord on the last "4" of the interlude being split into halves, of which the second is the initial note of the new sentence.

The second line is eight bars long. It has a half-close at the 4th bar, and a full-close at the 8th, both "suspended," so that the final chord of the cadence comes on the "3" of the bar. The student will notice the rich modulatory beauty of the full-close. These two sentences form the first part of the song melody, and are to be borne in mind as (a).

The third sentence follows on at once. It is eight bars long, and contains two half-closes, one (in the 4th bar) as its own "comma"-cadence, and one (in the 8th bar) continuative in the manner of the third line of the Mathew Arnold poem quoted above.

This present sentence is "developmental." It forms the first half of the concluding (or "b") section of the song-tune.

The second half of this concluding sentence is seven bars long. It has no middle cadence. Being the concluding sentence of the verse, it naturally ends with a full, perfect close.

The above ((a) and (b)) stands in the main disposition of the piece as **A**.

The second part of the piece (**B**) is a repeat of the first part (**A**) from the point where, at the close of the opening nine-bar sentence, the interludial passage appeared.

The second part of sentence (a) runs the same course, coming again to its rich, modulatory close; also the first part of the third sentence (a), with its continuative cadence; and then comes the grand conclusion, but with the original seven bars extended here cumulatively over twelve bars: that is to say, the 6th bar, instead of stopping itself, goes on and on, with ever increasing power, until another five bars of powerful music have been crushed out.

The prelude-interlude now becomes postlude, and brings the music to a deeply peaceful close.

This "folk-song" can at will be played with free pauses at the cadences, as it were a hymn-tune sung by a large congregation.

*(To be continued.)*



## PERSONAL DOCUMENTS.

### II.

My attention was first seriously attracted to the player-piano by some remarks in one of Sir Edward Elgar's lectures at the Birmingham University, to the effect that "machine" players would ultimately supplant the human variety. I remember the storm of protest and execration that raged around such a heterodox pronouncement amongst the unimaginative orthodox musicians, professional and lay, and I am bound to admit that with most of the execration I was in cordial agreement. Nevertheless, distasteful as was the opinion to my æsthetic sense, it served to focus my attention upon a matter that had hitherto been dismissed from my mind with a contemptuous sneer, if indeed, I had condescended to give it a moment's thought. Then a neighbour became possessed of what H. G. Wells calls "a musical gorilla, with fingers all of one length, and a sort of soul," and the walls of my residence being constructed upon the acoustic principles adopted by jerrybuilders, *i.e.*, that sounds emanating from one of a semi-detached pair shall be slightly more audible in the other, I could henceforth complain of no lack of opportunity for study. My impressions were various. My neighbour was a non-musical individual. That is to say, he had a natural feeling for music, but being quite uncultivated, his musical sense was dormant. Beyond the usual mawkish ballads that one hears amongst unmusical folk, nothing musical had chanced his way. The early efforts with the player were not inspiring. I can put up with a certain amount of musical comedy, but Sunday became a day entirely devoted to the worship of the particular muse that presides over this form of art, and soon the "gorilla" was to me a veritable fiend capable of raising all the baleful passions of my nature.

My opinion of the "machine" at this time is unprintable. I solicited the gods to put it into my neighbour's heart to change it for a gramophone. My prayers were answered, but, as is usual with prayers, not in the way asked for. A subtle change came over the character of the playing. The deadly machine-like regularity of the pedalling gave place to one that had some reference to the rhythm of the music,

and a sense for the pianoforte tone. The "musical comedies" having presumably been worked out, better stuff found itself in little by little. Strauss waltzes, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin, and then at last Beethoven! Surely this record is a sufficient justification for "the machine," if indeed it needs one. It is not necessary to go into the question as to whether the machine as an executant can compare with the first-class pianist. The fact that a non-musical person can, by its means, be brought to an appreciation and love of the finest music in the pianoforte repertoire was a good enough inducement for me to become the possessor of a player. In my hands it has been chiefly an instrument for the study of music. The orchestra is for me the king of instruments. Now if I am going to attend a concert where an unfamiliar work is to be played, I get, if possible, the roll and the score and go to the performance in a position to understand and appreciate the composition, the reading of the conductor, and the playing of the orchestra. By means of the player I have become acquainted at first hand with Balakirev, Glazounov, R. Strauss, Debussy, Dale, Max Régér, Scriabine, and a host of other composers, ancient and modern, and am in a position to appreciate the trend of modern musical thought in a way that would have been quite impossible for me without a player.

Then, too, there is the insight that an intelligent user can obtain into the technique of pianism. Out of an ordinary audience at a pianoforte recital, how many persons are really in a position to appreciate the merits or demerits of the performance?

I am told that such technical knowledge is not necessary to the enjoyment of the playing. Granted—but is not the enjoyment of the finest performance greatly increased from the intellectual side by a knowledge of what should be aimed at and how it should be done?

In conclusion I would say that while the player must be looked upon as a medium for the highest artistic expression in certain directions, its great advantage at the present time is an entirely utilitarian one, in that it places in the hands of the ordinary person with music in his soul, but no technique in his fingers, a means for becoming acquainted with music at first hand, no matter in what direction his taste would lead.

## CURIOUS COMPOSITIONS.

### I.

KUHNAU'S "BIBLE SONATA," *David and Goliath*.

In 1700, in Leipzig, was a serious-minded musician, a man of diversified talents, well into his fortieth year, a thoughtful experimenter, widely known throughout Germany. His name was Johann Kuhnau. As a boy he had sung at church, as a youth he studied and taught languages. As a young man, he had settled in Leipzig (in 1682), becoming very soon cantor of St. Thomas (1684). In 1688 he became "concert-director." He studied law, and qualified for advocate. In the year 1700 he held important offices in the University. In 1722 he died, in a reputation enhanced by all the above; by his further labours as translator from French, Italian, Greek, Latin, and Hebrew; by his musico-scientific treatises; by his satirical poetry; and by his musical compositions.

His music is partly alive to-day. Some of it, indeed, can be fanned to perfect flame. Browning would have loved to study it. In the *Alte Meister des Klavierspiels* of Peters (page 45) is a little prelude in G which, for tenderness of tone and sincerity of utterance, stands out conspicuously before Bach. In Augener's *The Classic Companion* (Vol. 1, page 6) is reprinted his "Sonata in B flat"—his first clavier sonata, this, also the first clavier sonata ever written, for Kuhnau "invented" the style and form of sonata by borrowing and adapting the ideas of contemporary Italian chamber-musicians. This sonata came out in 1695, when Kuhnau was thirty-five. Four generations later, in 1819, Beethoven, then aged forty-nine, wrote his great sonata for "hammer-clavier" in the same key (op. 106). This, the most extended example of pure pianoforte sonata the world has yet seen, is the completion of Kuhnau's initiatory effort; the difference between these two works, which thus span one hundred and twenty years, being as the difference between the second day of Creation and the fifth.



As is invariably the case with the first experimental "inventions" of artists working by mind rather than by soul, Kuhnau's B flat sonata was successful. So, a year later, in 1696, he sent out seven others of the same class ("fresh-fruits" he called them). These play rather tiresomely now. Five years later, in 1700, came six most wondrous pieces of programme music.

These are the famous "Bible" sonatas. In them he tells six scriptural stories, and gravely points scriptural morals.

Kuhnau must have been an interesting companion. He was probably a good talker, and undoubtedly a fine wit. But he would seem to have lacked true sense of humour—or, if not that, to have failed to perceive the ridiculous; for in his "Bible sonatas," are innumerable utterly obvious realisms. Utterly obvious, that is, to us. To the less sophisticated music-lovers of 1700, they no doubt seemed all right, and, indeed very fine; though four years later, Bach, then a youth of rapidly advancing genius, effected a fine skit upon them in his "Capriccio upon the departure of a beloved brother."

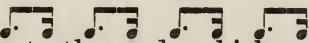
But if we approach Kuhnau in the right spirit, we find ample life in his "Bible" sonatas. We have the right spirit set out for us once for all by Browning, as in the "parleying" with Charles Avison—

*They seem*  
*Dead, do they, lapsed things lost in limbo? Bring*  
*Our life to quicken theirs, and straight each king*  
*Starts, you shall see, stands up, from head to foot*  
*No inch that is not . . .*

Kuhnau, or anyone else we chose to name.

"David and Goliath," the first (and best) of the set, tells the story of the conflict between the youthful Hebrew and the giant Philistine. It contains eight sections, and is so clear that little more than the verbal "tags" are needed to make the music intelligible to the average player-pianist.

(1) *The stamping and defying of Goliath.*—The music is full of the giant's bravado. He stamps and storms

about, in heavy chords  and with a flow of bad language at the end which could only be expressed by a ruthless drummer.

(2) *The terror of the Israelites, and their prayer.*—The poor Hebrews show their fear in chords of slow pulsation, in mournful chromatic descent. They utter their prayer by means of a well-known German chorale. . . . As they are fearsome and prayerful at one and the same time, both these phases of the music naturally occur simultaneously, the one forming the accompaniment, the other the melody. (The player-pianist here needs skilful use of touch-levers in order to make the melody as prominent as prayer should be above fear.)

*Responsive to the summons,  
Or, rather, to his long-nurs'd inclination*

(as Walt Whitman would have said), David appears, (3) with courage, confidence, and humility in the exact proportions of a juvenile lead. His music is light, sweet, calm, and triple; and, closing softly, forms the end of the first act.

(4) (a) *The dispute between David and Goliath.*—Goliath has the first ferocious say—two bars of massive chords. David responds mildly; but Goliath rudely interrupts him. David rushes in a brief remark; but Goliath again shows his bad breeding by a second interruption. David is thereby annoyed, and for a moment both wrangle together, the giant in the bass, the young shepherd in the treble. (The Hebrews are silent through all this, like onlookers during preliminary sparring.) . . . (b) A momentary pause ensues, both David and Goliath having come in on the last chord, and so mutually securing the last word. . . . David stoops, and picks up the pebble (not described in the music). . . . He puts it into the sling (also not described in the music) . . . slowly swings the sling round his head (eight steadily descending notes) . . . swiftly shoots out the stone, and awaits results (a pause on the note C, that closes the descending phrase of the eight) . . . the stone flies at the forehead of Goliath, and splits it to the brain

(a rapid upward rush of notes ending, in sharp, crashing impact, upon the top note E. . . . On this last note is a pause . . . then a moment of silence. . . .

Goliath falls . . .

I have been speaking flippantly, and not without reason. But, for a moment, flippancy here must cease. No one can listen to these next few bars of music without feeling just how much his defeat meant to the powerful Philistine—no one, that is, who, as artist, can realize that even a wicked bully imagining himself right has it within him to die heart-broken. . . . The music clangs downward heavily, reluctantly, through two bars; then wearily, painfully, for two more; and finally sinks into a sad, strangely tender, almost inaudible, close.

“Casca Goliath,” indeed. You see him on knees; then on hands and face; then utterly prostrate. One thinks gratefully of Kuhnau for this evidence of true dramatic feeling.

(5) A move is soon made. The sequel is energetic. The Philistines fly; and the Israelites, brave now that danger is over, rush after them, and massacre with glee. . . . The music is what might be expected—hurrying and agitated, and pauseless. It starts very loud; but, getting softer and softer, gradually dies out in silence. Note one thing: there is nothing in the music here to indicate that the passage must close *rallentando*; which is as it should be, for the Philistines, though they run out of sight (and so out of hearing), don’t run any slower until they have contrived to get right away safe.

(6) *The joy of the Israelites over their victory.*—Here is a sort of minuet-march, of gay, festive spirit, and animated tone.

(7) *The singing and playing of the maidens in honour of David.*—The girls come out to a delicately rhythmic bass accompaniment. They are in two choirs, one treble, the other contralto, and sing in short, dovetailed, responses. The music here is very lovely; but there is rather a good deal of it—more than David, as a modest hero, could stand up against without going red.



(8) The last stage of all is the official rejoicing, here called the "*general exultation and joyful dancing of the people.*" Its music is broad, full, and sonorous, widening out into a majestically Handelian close, which when we have left, we suddenly remember to be all an illusion—the fight is centuries old, Kuhnau has been dead a half-score generations, and we by rights ought not to have been moved one jot by these musty efforts of an old German cantor, composer, scholar, teacher, lecturer, conductor, theorist, inventor, lawyer, scientist, experimentalist, poet, critic, publicist, artist, musician, professor, religionist, and thinker of things in general.

DOMINUS.

[We cannot trace this composition in any catalogue of rolls. "Dominus" informs us, however, that he possesses it in a Pianola edition, No. 2191 (L).—Ed. P.P.R.]

## MUSICAL RESEARCH.

BANGOR PROFESSOR'S PIANO-PLAYER.

### THE NEW TOUCH.

Dr. G. H. Bryan, F.R.S., professor of mathematics at the University College of North Wales, Bangor, . . . has been making a study of pianoforte "touch," with a view of overcoming, as far as possible, the differences which are commonly supposed to exist between the touch of the professional pianist and that of the pneumatic player-piano. The outcome of his eleven years' study was shown to me at Dr. Bryan's residence, Plas Gwyn, near Bangor, and its working and effects were demonstrated by the professor. . . . The invention, which Professor Bryan calls an auxiliary lever, consists entirely of a slender lever, attached horizontally to the front of a player-piano in position at a grand piano, for which provisional protection has been sought. In the present instance, the lever is a slender brass bar, pivoting on a large screw, from which a cord depends, passing over two small pulleys to one of the air-chests which are part of the mechanism of a player-piano. The secret of the lever's astonishing efficacy is to be found in its connection with the air-chest. As Dr. Bryan pointed out, the inexperienced beginner who prefers to leave the lever untouched gets no worse results from a player-piano than he would without it; the performer, who has some knowledge of music, and who will take the trouble to set the lever to the right expression—*fortissimo*, *forte*, *mezzoforte*, *piano* or *pianissimo*—will at once obtain an increased breadth of contrast; with a little further experience he can obtain various dynamical effects of a novel character such as a brilliant ringing treble with a light bass, a soft mellow treble with a vigorous bass, differentiation between notes of chords in any part of the scale and so forth. But a more important effect is that, by applying hand pressure to the lever, the touch of the human fingers can be transmitted directly to the notes of the piano. . . . Dr. Bryan informed me that he had given a demonstration of the invention at the annual meeting of the Physical Society of London, at the Imperial College on Friday, the 14th inst., a player-piano and a grand piano being specially provided for the purpose. . . . In the paper accompanying the demonstration, Dr. Bryan discussed the important point as to the extent to which the quality of notes played on the piano depends on the manner in which the notes are struck, and the extent to which differences of "touch" are due to such effects. . . . The whole experiment was indeed a very novel one, for though the aeroplane, motor car, kinematograph, and gramophone have frequently figured in scientific and technical papers, the pneumatically-played piano has hitherto been conspicuous by its absence from such publications. Yet Dr. Bryan claimed that the present paper showed that this instrument provided abundant material for research in the study of acoustics besides exemplifying many points regarding "touch," which very well merit more attention than they now receive from pupils learning to play the

pianoforte. In conclusion, Dr. Bryan said the existence of these differences in the quality of tone, depending on differences of touch, makes the theory of the vibrations of a pianoforte string very difficult. In view of the tests shown at the Physical Society, it seems fairly certain not only that such differences exist, but also that they largely account for the differences between good and bad pianoforte playing. The experiments show that a pneumatic player, controlled by his (Dr. Bryan's) auxiliary lever, is capable of producing those differences, certainly in as marked a degree as is possible with finger playing, and while he found it by no means easy to reproduce the effects in striking keys with his fingers, it was clearly shown that a beginner, with no experience whatever, could easily reproduce them by means of his (Dr. Bryan's) auxiliary lever with a player-piano.—*Liverpool Daily Post*, February 19, 1913.



## MUSIC NOTES AND NEWS.

Mr. Algernon Ashton (see *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 1, p. 123), in connection with the letter of Mr. Norman Wilks dealt with below, made the following statement:—"I am certain that no true musician would care to see a machine like the player-piano, and be it ever so wonderful an invention, gradually pushing the ordinary piano into the background (and I have not the slightest fear that this would really ever come about), but I cannot see why an occasional public display of the player-piano's truly marvellous capabilities should offend the artistic mind, and do any harm."

\* \* \* \*

The swiftest way in which to demolish the opposition fostered by ignorance and prejudice is to give it light and air; for, like all obscure and morbid matter, physical or spiritual, if left in dark corners, such opposition (in the words of Hamlet) "mining all within, infects unseen." We therefore give special prominence to a letter sent by Mr. Norman Wilks to *The Musical Standard*.

### MECHANICAL MUSIC: A PROTEST.

To the Editor, *The Musical Standard*.

SIR,—I wonder with what feelings all lovers of music thought of a concert which took place at Queen's Hall recently. For this Nikisch, Gerhardt, and the London Symphony Orchestra were advertised, but although the programme included a concerto, one looked in vain for the name of any pianist. There was, instead, a—player-piano. What does this mean? That the eminent people concerned—one of the greatest living conductors, one of the most exquisite of living singers, and one of the best of English Orchestras—were anxious to show, by their personal support, their faith in the player-piano's artistic future? The idea is absurd—for the machine in question, though doubtless excellent in its way, is nothing, when all is said, but a machine, and the music it makes, no matter how great the skill of the manipulation, is bound to be always more or less perfunctory. No artistic machine can really do the artist's work. The most it can ever do is to take his place in circles where his work is not really appreciated, or, unobtainable. The idea, as I say, is absurd. Can it be then that this concert was merely a very "advanced" advertisement? In that case, I should much like to know the arguments that, on the one hand, induced these respected artists to lend themselves to it and that, on the other, enabled them to silence their musical consciences. On the face of it this is, one fears, but another example of the artistic cynicism that seems to be so peculiarly rampant here. In few other civilised countries, I venture to say, would musical public opinion have allowed such a concert. *Is it any wonder, in view of a fact like this, that so few musicians make England their musical home, or that the English are, as a nation considered unmusical?* Is it any wonder that those who have any artistic sincerity left—who still, in other words, respect their art—take refuge where their art will be respected?

Yours faithfully, NORMAN WILKS.

We do not feel called upon to attack Mr. Wilks by any more ferocious action than the reproduction of his letter—except to draw our readers' constructive attention to the clause we italicise. On investigation, that clause is seen to be based on something incontrovertibly erroneous. The truer cry is that until recently foreign musicians in England have crowded out native musicians. Our readers may infer from this one economic error the value of Mr. Wilks's æsthetic and philosophical ideas. Let us apply it specifically.

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Few musicians make England their home, those who have any artistic sincerity taking refuge elsewhere where their art will be respected. Now, Nikisch, Gerhardt, and half the members of the London Symphony Orchestra are foreigners who make England their home. They therefore, since they do not take refuge elsewhere, are without artistic sincerity. Also, since in England art is not respected, they live here without respect. These implied charges are serious, but Mr. Wilks modifies them by describing the persons concerned as "great" and "exquisite" artists (and therefore, by implication, as artistically sincere), and also as "respected."

Apart from the charge of bribery and corruption advanced in the phrase "to silence their consciences," Mr. Wilks is safe, for what he knocks down with his right hand he holds up with his left.

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Dr. E. Markham Lee (already familiar to readers of the *Piano-Player Review* through quotations made, in past numbers, from his writings upon the vital questions of the artistic status of the player-piano) has made the following remark in *Musical News*: ". . . Musicians, as a rule, have been unable to take seriously mechanical sound-reproducers . . . because their quality of sound is usually unsatisfactory and offensive. . . . But a good piano may . . . sing with as good a tone, and with almost as artistic a touch, when its hammers are controlled by pneumatic means, as when directed by the actual fingers and muscles of the pianist direct. Indeed the mechanism of the player-piano is but little more artificial than the mechanism of the pipe-organ, and the player-pianist has even more control over matters of touch and means of expression than the church or concert organist can obtain."

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Some time ago, Mr. Frederick H. Evans gave a player-piano demonstration at the Camera Club, Mr. G. B. Shaw in the chair. The editor of *The Musical Standard* ("J. H. G. B.") was present, and afterwards expressed himself as follows:—" . . . Mr. Evans manipulated his improved player-piano with extraordinary artistic insight. We felt the various performances were the next best thing to what a fine pianist could give us. Further improvements will come, possibly including the particular brilliancy of tone of the piano that is played by the fingers. In that respect, however, it

must be admitted Mr. Evans' performances were a revelation : just a little more resonance, just a little more plasticity, and really we might be listening to a pianoforte played in the ordinary way—but played with an out-of-the-common artistic control. It is just that absence of "more resonance" and "more plasticity" that made Mr. Evans' performances, excellent as they were, not absolutely removed from the kingdom of mechanism. But Mr. Evans would admit as much as that : he admitted, we think, that he could not compete with a Moriz Rosenthal ! . . . But the question of the degree of resonance is of some concern to us, as is, also, stiffness of rhythm, which was slightly noticeable even in the case of Mr. Evans' superlatively fine performances. . . . One further thing occurred to us : Is it true that chords on the pianoforte-player sound different than on the pianoforte played by the fingers ? It is certainly true that in the former case every note of the chord receives the same degree of force—except the melodic note. Is that also true—bearing in mind the varying strengths of the fingers—of the pianoforte as played without the assistance of the pianoforte-player ? . . . At all events, Mr. Evans had terribly hard work to do to produce the artistic effects he did : and it was far from being a graceful exhibition. Nay, it was, honestly speaking, very distracting, and we would have liked Mr. Evans and his apparatus, with all due courtesy, to have been invisible ! ”

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An important development in the preparing of songs-accompaniments stands to the credit of the Perforated Music Co., Ltd., who are issuing rolls with words. The next departure (one infinitely more vital) must be the preparation of music rolls containing numbered bar-lines and broad indication of form, etc. Till this is done, inexperienced player-pianists must continue to do a good deal of fumbling in the dark.

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The following excellent advice was recently given to a correspondent in *Bazaar* :—"To ensure getting a good second-hand instrument the one plan is to write direct to the makers. They constantly let an instrument out 'on approval' for a short time, or on hire, which, when returned, is at once considered to be second-hand, although it is practically new. Another is freely to use our private columns for making known your wants, at the same time taking ordinary business precautions. On no account be tempted by such advertisements as 'A widow is obliged to dispose of her instrument.' It is not of the slightest use our trying to tell you 'what points to notice,' for you would not understand technicalities ; and if we say good tone and workmanship you know that as well as we do. Unless you have a friend who is an expert and so could help you, then you had better purchase an instrument under our 'Special Service' rules."

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This "Important Notice" was recently made in *The Music Student* :—"A new series of articles by Mr. G. C. Ashton Jonson will commence in next month's issue, entitled : 'Advice on the use of the Piano-Player.'" We congratulate *The Music Student*.

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To the slowly growing list of British musicians who understand the question of the player-piano must now be added the name of a distinguished theorist, Mr. Stewart Macpherson. The following is taken from *Music*:—Addressing the London Section of the Incorporated Society of Musicians last month, Mr. Stewart Macpherson, one of the professors at the Royal Academy of Music, delivered an interesting lecture on “Musical Appreciation Study.” The aim of the study of musical appreciation was, he said, the cultivation of the art of listening. What they should realise was that music was a complex art, and that some sort of preparation for it was necessary. Their object should be to cultivate the observant attitude of mind in their pupils. At first it would require an effort, but in time it would become a more or less sub-conscious thing, by which beauties and subtleties unheard by the ordinary ear would enter into the mind of the listener. . . . Going on to discuss the question of the teacher’s equipment for directing his pupils in this study of appreciative listening, Mr. Macpherson mentioned key-board facility as among the teacher’s qualifications. The teacher must at least have a pure tone and an understanding style. *If, owing to the exigencies of his work, the teacher was unable to keep up his playing, let him get a player-piano.* In concluding, Mr. Macpherson observed that whilst the cultivation of the appreciation of music—appreciation which, by the way, was not dependent upon the amount of executive or technical skill acquired by the player—had in the past been neglected, there had recently been a great awakening in the matter of musical education, and the times were full of hope.

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The following also is taken from *Music* (March issue):—Although evidence is not entirely lacking that the ordinary music dealer views the player-piano with less distrust than he formerly did, there is no gainsaying the fact that many retailers are still afraid of the instrument. They are not alone in this attitude, for the American trade papers are constantly asking why the dealers of the United States are so chary of handling this splendid modern invention. Various reasons are given for this, the chief of which would seem to be the question of maintenance and the education of the tuner. The average small dealer has no one to send to repair the instrument if anything should go wrong with it. In England this difficulty will, of course, be removed by the steps the Music Trades Association is taking to instruct tuners by lectures and object lessons and afterwards to test them by examinations. Once a hundred tuners have obtained a certificate of competence as player-piano regulators from the examiners of the Music Trades Association the confidence of dealers will be established, and it follows as a natural corollary that business in player-pianos will increase from that moment.

## CONCERTS, LECTURES, AND RECITALS.

"There was a large and appreciative audience at the invitation recital held yesterday afternoon, at the Rushworth Hall when a very interesting programme was submitted. The fine qualities as regards exposition of pianoforte music were revealed in the pieces chosen for the Angelus Player-Piano, the splendid tone-colouring and brilliancy of execution being shown in the playing of Liszt's *Liebesträume* Nocturne, No. 3, and in Chopin's great polonaise in A flat. Mr. Wentworth Trueman's singing was much appreciated. The programme was varied with elocutionary recitals, both of the serious and humorous order, by Miss Sadie Chalmers, a Liverpool young lady, who displays exceptional gifts as an elocutionist. Her contributions formed one of the most enjoyable features of the concert."—*Liverpool Express*, February 14, 1913.

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" . . . In the Bach-Tausig Toccata and Fugue in D minor Mr. Parsons's playing was admirably clear cut and rhythmic; but this is one of the many pieces that the player-piano can play far better than any pianist. No human hands can possibly rise from strength to strength through the fugue in the way that the so-called mechanical instrument can. . . . —E. N., *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 19, 1913.

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Programme of Pianola and Vocal Recital, given at the Victoria Hotel, Wolverhampton, on February 19th, 1913, by Mr. Harry Ellingham and Miss Chatterly Ingram (Winner of Elkington Challenge Shield in principal open contralto competition, Birmingham, 1912). Prelude and Fugue in C sharp major (Bach); Sonata, part 2 only (Dale); Song, "Von Ewiger Liebe" (Brahms); Sonata Trágica, 1st and 4th movements (Macdowell); Rhapsodie Hongroise, No. 5 (Liszt); Romance (Schumann); Songs (a) "Melisande in the Wood" (Alma Goetz), (b) "Song of Thanksgiving" (Frances Allitsen); and Polonaise in F sharp minor (Chopin).

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From the *Chatham News* (March 15th, 1913):—

That the player-piano has come to stay is well-known, and it was demonstrated beyond doubt, by the excellent recital and keenly appreciative audience at Messrs. Murdoch and Co.'s saloon on Thursday afternoon last week. Since the days of the Cabinet Player, great advance has been made in perfecting the pneumatic action and music rolls, and to-day the combined or superimposed player is, in the hands of a musician, capable of interpreting the works of the great masters in a manner approachable only by pianists of front rank ability. The practised musician may be able to detect imperfections, by very accurate knowledge of the subject demonstrated, and by intent and keen hearing. But from the instructive display afforded us after recital, it is obvious that detections become more remote (and impossible) the greater the skill of the operator.

We confess that on this occasion the brilliance of the performance robbed us of all inclination to make attempt in that direction. Mr. D. Ferguson, the recitalist, gave masterly demonstrations of the six pieces set for performance, producing very striking effects in tone graded from most delicate piano to thunderous forte, backed throughout by intelligent phrasing.

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From the *Eastbourne Gazette* (March 14th, 1913) :—

An extremely entertaining and instructive lecture was delivered at the Town Hall on Thursday afternoon, by Mr. G. C. Ashton Jonson on the player-piano, as a new factor in modern musical education. The purposes of the lecture was epitomised in these words :—

“ We are standing to-day on the threshold of a new era in music—an era ranking in educational importance with that which came into being when the printing press of Guttenberg first made possible the duplication and dissemination of written thought. Few but those who stand highest in the musical profession and whose touch is upon the pulse of the music-loving public have yet realised the development which is taking place in modern musical taste, or have understood its ultimate significance. The great factor in this change is the player-piano, which has been familiarising the people with that type of music which was previously regarded as the esoteric privilege of a small circle.” No better “demonstrator”—if one may use the word—of the marvellous possibilities of the player-piano could be found than Mr. Ashton Jonson, himself a cultured musician of wide, practical and æsthetic knowledge. Although practically everybody has heard the player-piano, it is doubtful if many have heard it played as Mr. Ashton Jonson played it on Thursday afternoon. To many present it was little short of a revelation. For ourselves we went to the lecture in a mood of some scepticism—born of many previous similar experiences—but we came away completely converted. The stock objections hitherto levelled at the player-piano—that it can never be anything more than a mere mechanical contrivance, incapable of either subtle gradations of tone and phrasing, or of any direct individuality of interpretation on the part of the performer, and so on—were entirely vanquished by Mr. Ashton Jonson, who demonstrated beyond any possibility of contradiction his entire command over the whole resources, both mechanical and æsthetic, of this marvellous instrument. With regard to another objection often made, that the possession of a player-piano would lead to the utter neglect of piano-playing, the lecturer remarked that in his own case the result had been exactly opposite; and he gave a very valuable hint to owners of player-pianos—that in playing any composition on the player-piano they should make a practice of having the printed copy on the desk before them, so that they can follow the musical annotation while the player-piano is playing the piece. This habit, added the lecturer, tends to increase the student’s facility in sight-reading enormously, by teaching him to follow difficult music swiftly with the eye.



## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- R. B. (BRIGHTON).—It is well in rewinding to pedal very steadily, and in the case of a long roll (which may have become a little slack upon the cylinder) to steady the cylinder with the forefinger of each hand, also to arrest the cylinder now and then for a moment in order that the rewind may pull-in the slack.
- A. T. (RHYL).—In the rewind, the edge of the roll should not buckle up and bend back upon itself through touching too closely its flange. If for some reason it does this, the roll must be lifted out and the paper pulled from the cylinder, the whole thing being rewound upon its roll by hand.
- A. C. S. (OBAN).—When the playing is being contrived upon a light pressure, it sometimes happens that the paper of the music-roll winds itself rather loosely around the lower cylinder. Then, when a *sforzato* is made, the suddenly applied extra pressure, communicating itself first to the cylinder, results in a catching-up of the "slack," which brings about a momentary pause in the further unwinding of the music-roll. We imagine your trouble arises from this cause. You must endeavour to play without creating a "slack" or (when you find the "slack" present) without an over-strong *sforzato*.
- EARNEST (NEW BRIGHTON).—There is no value at all in such things as Parson's "Paraphrase" of "Swanee River." It is utterly without feeling, or even intelligent thought for the associations of the song. The composer has emptied over the tune all the shallow fripperies which go to make up the worst class of music. The result is something like what a child's face would be if enamelled and painted as a woman's of sixty. Not once does the natural beauty of the tune show through, except perhaps towards the close. We should imagine this "arrangement" was originally for violin solo. Certainly we have never before seen or heard anything in pianoforte music quite so bad.
- ANTIQUARIAN (BRISTOL).—No, the "sonata in F minor" given in some of the music-roll catalogues as the work of J. S. Bach is not by that composer. It is by his son Philip Emmanuel. It represents the transition from Bach to Beethoven. The error is regrettable. Unfortunately, it is not alone, several similar misplacements having been made with other composers.
- "THREE HOURS" (NEWCASTLE).—We fear you have discovered one of the impossibilities of the player-piano. Such a work as Mendelssohn's 22nd "Lied ohne Worte" is artistically unplayable. If you try to make the melody separately song-like above its accompaniment, you will succeed only in parts; for sometimes the melody goes down into the region of the bass touch-button, and sometimes the accompaniment rises up in part into the region of the treble, and when you try to throw out melody notes by momentarily open pedalling, you will open upon the chords as well as the melody. If you play by means of a roll having melody-perforations, you have to submit to little "splits" and *acciacaturas*

which are intolerable. Better give the piece up, or else have it arranged for you with the melody an octave higher and the "closed" accompaniment arranged so as not to clash with the "open" melody notes. We shall have a fine art of transcription for the player-piano sooner or later.

J. H. (CLAPHAM).—Your question is a deep one. We cannot answer it fully here, not having space for 75,000 words! *Why do untrained player-pianists of musical ability develop so rapidly a taste for advanced classical and modern music?* A reply may be suggested, however, for your own personal consideration: Because they approach music with free minds and natural inclinations, and because no dry technician stands between them and the soul of the art. For the acceptance of new or extreme compositions, an unsophisticated mind is absolutely essential. Teachers and critics as a rule are very sophisticated—hence their innumerable errors. So-called "ignorant" player-pianists, in our opinion, form the backbone of the musicianship of this country. In any case, it is such people who, apart from absolute geniuses, grow most rapidly into a full appreciation of music. And it is these people the player-piano most attracts.

NOMENCLATURE (S.W.).—Yes; "player-pianism" is the handiest term. By-the-by, it is strange no maker should have hit upon the historically true and scientifically self-explanatory name for these instruments of ours—a name that reflects the past and yet still belongs to the present. The mechanism of the player-piano is controlled and actuated by air—it is a product of modern pneumatology. In the old days when the polychord was played by a clavier, men coined the word *clavichord*; when the psaltery was so played, they invented the word *harpsichord*; now that the dulcimer (the prototype of the pianoforte) is moved by air, they should have adopted *pneumachord*. The word does not look pretty at first sight, but to a musician versed in special study, and when subjected to the influence of analogy, it explains itself. Its strangeness would soon then pass, as did the strangeness of the term *piano e forte* two centuries ago; and its essential dignity and expressiveness would then lift it into the place that is its by right.

A. BENDLEY.—The loss of grip in the pedalling of your player denotes leakage. If there is no particular leakage to be found, it is probably a general trouble spread over all the valves, and the instrument will probably need a thorough overhauling and adjustment.

BARUSITE.—Why not have the tracker bar taken out and exchanged for one of standard pattern?

A. R. CRATCHLEY.—Yes, you can have a 65-note tracker bar in place of the 58, but you will occasionally lose notes at either end, but you will have the advantage of getting at all 65 note rolls. 58 notes is the compass of most players fitted to organs.

VOCAL (MANCHESTER).—No. 1 *Piano-Player Review* gave full particulars of How to Accompany, including information on marking rolls for the purpose.

G. R. BATH.—The “player-pianist” by Miller Wilson, to be obtained from the Perforated Music Co., contains some information on the mechanism of players. A number of articles on player-mechanism have been published in *Work*. “The Care of the Piano-player” in the early numbers of this journal may also be of use to you.

VOCAL (HYTHE).—We believe the cutting of a special song accompaniment to order is rather expensive, but if the song is likely to become popular, a direct enquiry to the makers of rolls may be some inducement to the early cutting of the roll.

PESSIMIST (TAUNTON).—Is your house damp? Damp is much more likely to be the cause of the motor trouble. It causes a swelling of grain in the wood slides, thus making an uneven surface. Air getting under the slides results in the spasmodic working of the motor. Rub dhwn tee slide with sand paper placed on a piece of plate glass (Oakey’s No. 0 paper). then burnish with black lead.

B. BONNER (HASTINGS).—See reply to “Pessimist” above.

ACE OF SPADES.—Use a pump on the dumb note. If this does not cure, you will have to call in the expert.

HAMPTON X.—The springs referred to in our last number are those placed *inside* the main suction box, and must not be confused with the feeder springs.

KEYS (BRADFORD).—In most player-pianos the keys move only because the other part of the action is lifted, and the keys drop of their own weight. A lever for propping up the keys is usually provided. It, therefore, does not hurt the piano if the keys are allowed to move.

STUART H.—Hard work—very hard work is it? We give you the choice of three reasons. 1. That you don’t know how to blow; 2. That the instrument is out of order; 3. That the instrument is bad at its best. We advise (1) Read “How to Play” in this journal, see back numbers; (2) Have the best expert you can get to overhaul; (3) Sell it, or better even, burn it, and buy a modern one. Avoid bargains as you would the——plague!

CAKE WALK.—Any of the London houses will send you lists; write to advertisers herein. Stools will sometimes slide backwards, even when playing calmly, how much more so to the tune of the Gaby Glide or some other glide. To remedy, get two rubber buttons and put one on each back leg (of the stool). If this is not sufficient, you must drive in two small nails and file off the heads, leaving a small spike, which, however, is not without effect on the carpet.

W. PONDER.—If no public recitals are given in your neighbourhood, write to the chief music warehouse of your district for information, or to some of the chief wholesale London houses.

READER K. R.—See “How to Play” in our three previous numbers.

BABS.—See “How to Play” (Part I. will interest you), and answer all your queries.



THOMSON T.—Read “Care of the Piano-player,” Nos. 1, 2, and 3 *P.P.R.*

ERIC J.—See answer next above.

HILDA.—Try pedalling in slippers without high heels (we should call 2½ inches high). Better results are obtained by doing without a shoe of any kind.

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## REVIEWS AND PRESS COMMENTS.

By MR. RUTLAND BOUGHTON, in *The Daily Herald*, February 22, 1913 :  
—“Another musical monthly has now appeared, *The Piano-Player Review*. I am not much in love with mechanical music, though there are certain points in its favour. I suppose the chief authority on the subject is Mr. Sydney Grew, who contributes to the February number. . . . However that may be, the article signed by him should be read by all who like or hate the piano machine. *The Piano-Player Review* contains also articles which should appeal to all musicians, irrespective of their interest in player-pianos.”

## CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor *The Piano-Player Review*.

Sir,—I read "Player's" response in this month's issue to my suggestion *re* "P.P. Circles." I read it, but that is about all; for his flippant attitude is not for serious consideration. Also, I understand my pleasures, while he (or she) does not.

I do not see why those of us who "take our pleasures altogether too seriously" are of necessity touched with "persevering incompetency." We are without adequate knowledge of music. But that is no reason why we should refrain from getting it. I imagine (from his slighting reference to Shakespeare) that "Player" is an uncalculating follower of George Bernard Shaw, uncalculating, because (1) he speaks lightly of what Shaw says is still awaiting an opportunity to confer honour upon the poet who may show comprehension of its worth and beauty, viz., "old maid-hood," and because (2) he flounders so badly in his attempted ridicule of my idea *re* the "48."

Let me show what I mean by the latter. "Player" says my "P.P. Circle" would equal the following:—"In my town we have a ladies' Shakesperian Society which meets once a week for the study of the immortal one. The scheme was started in an effusive moment by a vicar's unmarried sister, an exotic plant with ideas 'forced under the kale-pot of the thirty-nine articles,' and, of course, no knowledge of life or literature. Imagine the dear old tabby matrons and the kittenish spinsters of the parish sitting in solemn conclave *once* a week, the while each takes a turn at the reading—fancy work and garments for the 'poor' in progress all the time. The plan is to commence with 'The Comedies,' work through 'The Tragedies,' and finish up the season with the 'Sonnets.'" You see "Player's" haste? He has not calculated the matter. By a rough computation, I find it would take 190 hours to read the tragedies, the comedies, and the poems. We may presume "Player's" society has a six weeks' vacation in the summer, four weeks at Christmas, and an average of four other weeks miscellaneous missings. Their meetings are thereby reduced to 36 each year. As they work through the "Comedies, Tragedies, and Sonnets," each year, each meeting covers five hours. Allowing one hour each occasion for lost time, each meeting runs, say, from 3.0 to 9.0.

"Player" says nothing about the historical plays. If his ladies cover them as well, I compute each meeting will have to run from 2.30 to 10.0 every seventh day! It is a physical impossibility.

Apart from "Player's" temporal error, the cases are in no way parallel, for the Bach "48" can be run through in five hours.

I thank you for your suggestion that I should outline a scheme for the establishment of "P.P. Circles," but I feel it is a matter best left for more experienced musicians than

Yours faithfully,

ERNEST BERGSON.

Manchester,  
March 3rd, 1913.

*The following letters have been received from correspondents in London and Toronto. We set them out here at length in order to show the diverse nature of player-pianists' needs and the directions in which we wish to be of assistance. Editorial response will be made in our May issue.*

“ February 26th, 1913.

“ Dear Sir,—There are several matters on which I should like to consult you in the hope that you may be able to answer my queries.

“ 1. Can you tell me of any player-piano which includes a roll of Pinsuti's song, 'I fear no foe' ? I have searched in vain hitherto for this, although it is one of the best known of bass songs. I should much like to obtain a roll of the accompaniment if at all possible. The cost of cutting it specially is prohibitive.

“ 2. Can you help by giving guidance to those who would like some pieces that are at once melodious and fairly classical ? My own knowledge of pieces of this kind is decidedly limited, and I should welcome guidance. The names of about a dozen rolls would be a real help.

“ 3. I wonder whether you could give me a clue to the piece which I have tried to represent on the enclosed slip ? I heard it played years ago by a first-rate musician, and have hitherto been unsuccessful in finding out what it is, though there are phrases in certain pieces by Mendelssohn that are similar to it. If you could help me to discover this I should be most grateful. I do not want to wait until the future to find it out, according to the story in 'The Lost Chord' !

“ 4. Would it be possible for you to make a separate list of, or in some way or other to indicate, the sacred pieces, vocal and instrumental, that are available for player-pianos ? There does not seem to be much demand for sacred music ; hymns, songs, and pieces, and this would make such a list all the more acceptable to those who are endeavouring to gather material of this kind.

“ 5. Also may I suggest that you should give us a list of suitable songs for all voices, for which we can obtain the music roll accompaniments ?

“ I read the *Review* month by month with great interest. I fear, however, that I should be too unsuccessful to adopt the suggestions for making my own music rolls, much as I should like to do it in view of the expense of purchasing.

“ With all good wishes for your magazine,

“ Yours faithfully,”  
\_\_\_\_\_”

To the Editor *The Piano-Player Review*.

“ Dear Sir,—May I, in taking out a year's subscription, thank you for the admirable 'editing' of the *Review* ? Mr. Bertram Smith's papers are especially 'human.' If people like myself who have had a very hard and busy life, and have been obliged to 'neglect' music for years, will study with real care the admirable articles in the *Review*, they will gain what is much required, viz., the happiness of improving in their playing. What-



ever is said or written against a *good* player-piano is no argument to me ; I am not young now, my love of music has not been strengthened because I had little training and no time for practice or concert attendance. Now that I am ordained to rest, I get keen pleasure from my modern player : but it is increased by your *Review*, which brings my intelligence out and stimulates the practice. Would you extend your kindness by allowing correspondents for a small fee, say 1s. or 2s., to ask you questions *by post* ? The letters must, of course, be short, and possibly a limit put on the number of words. I think you would help."

#### CORRESPONDENCE QUERY.

"Can an answer be given to my experience that a good many pieces do not 'go' well on a player ? Mine is only nine months old, and is excellent, but Grieg and some of Mendelssohn I find, as a rule, a failure. A list of the best composers for the instrument might be helpful, or is the matter one of idiosyncrasy, or want of ear ? . . . . One often sees many people who are at the 'struggling' stage, and find the companies can't help them much. It is at this stage that some give up all serious effort to improve their work, and suffer a relapse—playing only what they like. The fewer feeble and bad players on the player the better for its reputation in a musical sense. So please extend your help as I suggest if possible. The papers on pedalling are very useful ; I wish more space could be given, however, on all rolls, or more lines indicative of a pause. Thanking you, I am, truly yours, etc."

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*Owing to pressure of space, we regret being unable to print Library Announcements this month.—Ed.*

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